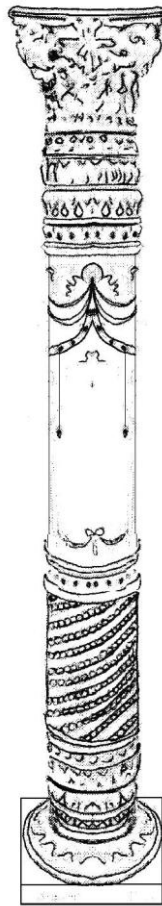


**Medicean Aspirations in America:  
The Impact of William H. Vanderbilt's New York Drawing-  
room on American Palace Décor**

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## Introduction

With optimistic spirit, unsurpassed economic growth, and industrial might that seemingly appeared over night in the years immediately following the Civil War, America heralded a new era that would be defined by a new group of immensely wealthy Americans. Grand entertaining and the erection of magnificent new ‘palaces’ were to be the chosen symbols of their wealth. The latter replaced the more often than not austere neo-classical and Gothic residences designed by the celebrated ‘romantic’ architect Alexander Jackson Davis and his contemporaries, constructed a generation earlier. The new breed of houses would prove to be nothing less than mansions, modeled on the great palaces and castles of Europe. Coinciding with the construction of these new edifices, Americans for the first time consciously opted to adapt styles from previous centuries when they decided to “act the Medicean part in America,” striving to establish and then perpetuate their personas as America’s self appointed aristocracy.<sup>i</sup> None of the interiors of these great houses could surpass the unparalleled grandeur created for America’s wealthiest industrialist of the age, William H. Vanderbilt. His Florentine, Renaissance-inspired drawing-room at 640 Fifth Avenue in New York City that was celebrated in a self-published ten-volume catalogue documenting the house and its contents would elevate Vanderbilt to the status of a Medici prince, reincarnated. Today the Vanderbilt drawing-room is often interpreted as an Aesthetic Movement confection that sprang from the minds of artisans and designers rebelling against America’s Industrial Revolution and its offerings of mass-produced furnishings for the American home. In reality, this influential room was much more – an interior with a completely distinct style symbolically based upon Florentine Renaissance prototypes.



Though some would mock its ornateness, most would recognize its sophistication, emulating or adapting, either in whole or part, its masterful décor. The Vanderbilt drawing-room would give rise to the concept of 'period rooms,' while becoming the hallmark by which all other homes of contemporary wealthy Americans would be judged.

While this style has become associated with America's late nineteenth century industrial age, it is rooted in the earlier Industrial Revolution of Britain, which America strove to surpass. During the reign of Queen Victoria (1819-1901), crowned in 1837, Britain's might swelled as its empire grew to encompass part of North Africa, America (Canada), India, and Australia. Formed more by accident than by design, Britain's Empire was based not merely on conquest, but trade. By the middle of the nineteenth century Britain had become the richest and most powerful nation in the world. It had pioneered the age of steam, manufactured more than half of the world's industrial goods, and shipped three quarters of the world's trade. The initial catalyst behind London's 1851 Great Exhibition, more commonly known as the 'Crystal Palace,' was to further develop and promote British industry in order to secure Britain's mercantile empire.

When Queen Victoria and her consort, Prince Albert (1819-1861), opened the Crystal Palace, so began an important series of what became known as 'World's' fairs (Pl. 1). Marked by its importance as a novelty and a clear symbol of the industrial age, the 1851 exhibition was one of the greatest events to take place during the nineteenth century.<sup>ii</sup> As the world's first ever international display of arts and manufacturers (technological achievements), the Great Exhibition also brought forward the infinite

variety of styles that were available for modern application. Within the exhibition, nearly one million exhibits were displayed, seen and inspected by over six million visitors, approximately a third of Britain's population at the time.<sup>iii</sup> With such a vast audience being exposed to new products and innovations as well as historical icons and artifacts from around the world, the ultimate outcome was the development of a growing segment of the population interested in learning about art and design. In previous centuries, there had been but a few design or pattern books at hand that defined the majority of the artistic production for a given generation; a case in point was Thomas Chippendale's 1754 design book, *The Gentleman and Cabinet Maker's Director*. But with the London celebration and burgeoning industrial revolution, a proliferation of design books were published and made available to not just society's elite, but to the general public at large. As a result of innovations in printing technology, such books not only had written descriptions and detailed illustrations, but also uniform colorized images via lithography. There was an explosion of materials that affected the general public's appreciation, appetite, and, in the end, level of consumption. The Western World would never be the same again.

The one-time laissez-faire attitudes toward design, first seriously challenged by British architect Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812-1852) who advocated the morality-laden 'Gothic' style, became matters for serious contemplation. Despite architects in England wanting to develop the 'Gothic' for all modern purposes, a survey of country houses in England during Victoria's reign found the most distinctive features were not Gothic, but the innovative adaptation of Italianate forms of Classicism.<sup>iv</sup> Joseph Paxton (1803-1865), the architect behind the 1851 exhibition's celebrated

Crystal Palace, derived his design inspiration through his experience working on large country estates belonging to the British aristocracy, experimenting in cast iron and glass construction for green houses and conservatories, such as those at Chatsworth where he was once a gardener.<sup>v</sup>

Chatsworth in Derbyshire, England, (Pl. 2) the Baroque house of the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire, has a long history as one of England's most impressive neo-classical edifices and temples to 'good taste.' It is even believed by many to have been Jane Austen's inspiration for the fictional country estate, Pemberley, owned by Fitzwilliam Darcy in her popular romantic 1813 novel *Pride and Prejudice*. The Sixth Duke, William Spencer Compton (1790-1858), expanded the collections at Chatsworth to include what he referred to as 'modern' sculpture, centered around, but not limited to, a remarkable collection of works by Italian sculptor Antonio Canova (1757-1822).<sup>vi</sup> Even though some of his purchases were acquired second-hand, they would not prevent their new owner from putting his own personal stamp on them. The Eagles atop the massive pair of gilt gasoliers acquired in 1822 from the famous Wanstead House sale, and now installed within the sculpture gallery at Chatsworth (Pl. 3), originally had serpents in their beaks, but as the Duke wrote: "[this] gave such offence as an indignity to [the family] crest that I was compelled to remove the much respected reptiles."<sup>vii</sup> This removal of the serpents illustrated how an owner of a great house made furnishing decisions, and ultimately expressed control over how items were displayed, let alone physically altered.

As the debate between Gothic and the innovative adaptation of Italianate forms of Classicism - by the mid-nineteenth century progressively being referred to as 'Renaissance revival' - waged on, the argument for why Italianate interiors were

considered appropriate outside Italy was being established. The Dukes of Northumberland, who had a tradition of being “regarded as... exemplar[s] of good taste,” utilized both the Gothic and the Renaissance revival styles for the interiors at Alnwick Castle, their ancestral home in Northumberland (Pl. 4).<sup>viii</sup> Thomas Chippendale (1718-1779) dedicated his 1754 *Director* to Hugh Seymore, Earl and First Duke of Northumberland (1750?-1786), whose patronage also included the painter Giovanni Antonio Canal (1697 – 1768), sculptor Joseph Wilton (1722-1803), cabinet makers William and John Linnell (1729-1796), and architect Robert Adam (1728-1792).<sup>ix</sup> The Third Duke, Hugh Percy (1785-1847), continued the established model, also following the trends of the Prince Regent (later George IV) commissioning furniture makers Morel and Hughes (1805-1827) and buying from eminent London art dealers, such as Robert Fogg (act. 1800-1820).<sup>x</sup> The Fourth Duke, Algernon Percy (1792-1865), would have the greatest impact on Alnwick’s interiors. Beginning in the 1850’s the Duke felt the necessity to redefine the castle to provide modern amenities and to create a more romantic Gothic silhouette. He employed the architect Anthony Salvin (1799-1881), who had only recently completed the remodeling and Gothic interiors at Peckforton Castle.<sup>xi</sup> However, while touring Italy in 1854 the Duke saw how medieval fortresses had been outfitted with “Renaissance and Baroque interiors” and sought to adapt this new direction to the alterations at Alnwick.<sup>xii</sup> In Rome Cardinal Antonelli (1806-1876), an art connoisseur, introduced the Duke to the architect Luigi Canina (dates unknown) and his assistant, Giovanni Montiroli (dates unknown), both of whom were subsequently commissioned to redesign the principle rooms at Alnwick, “based on High Renaissance precedents.”<sup>xiii</sup> The Duke also purchased at this time the important ‘Camuccini’ art

collection, which included works by Bellini, Raphael, Guido Reni Andrea del Sarto, Badalocchio, Claude and other Renaissance artists.<sup>xiv</sup>

The saloon at Alnwick Castle (Pl. 5) was the first room to be sumptuously outfitted and to fully demonstrate this new Italianate style. It featured two pairs of walnut double doors with carved central bosses representing lion's heads, and a fireplace with a lintel supported by two marble figures of Dacian slaves as focal points. Below the room's cornice was a frieze painted by Alessandro Mantovani (1814-1892), in the sensual and colorful style of mannerist artist, Guilio Romano (1499-1546).<sup>xv</sup> The Duke hoped the connection with such Italian artisans would "promote a more extensive system of artistic instruction in England in that style of decoration."<sup>xvi</sup> To further his ambitions, he went so far as to arrange for his British workman to attend the International Exhibition in London in 1862 and pay for drawing lessons for those who assisted the actual Italian artisans.<sup>xvii</sup> The end result was one of the English speaking world's most impressive and coherent tributes to a great Roman Palazzo.<sup>xviii</sup>

Americans who went abroad beginning in the 1860's became familiar with such 'modern' English country estates, such as Chatsworth and Alnwick Castle, as well as their sources of inspiration in Italy and other European countries. Following America's Civil War, a new class of citizens emerged with immense fortunes largely made through America's own Industrial Revolution, and which were spent freely and extravagantly. These wealthy Americans traveled around the world in unprecedented style and luxury, visiting the heralded world's fairs, touring the great cities of Europe, including London, Rome, Venice, Milan, Paris, Brussels, Munich, and Vienna. When they returned home, they brought back mementos, cases of illustrations including newly invented

photographs, as well as new ideas and perspectives regarding art and design.<sup>xix</sup>

Perceiving themselves as extensions of European, specifically British, nobility, upon their returns, they set out to recreate many of the grand estates and manners of living they admired while abroad.

Among the Americans touring Europe, particularly in Britain and Italy, was George Peabody Wetmore (1846 -1921). In 1862, at the age of sixteen, George inherited his father's Italianate Villa, Chateau-sur-Mer, or 'Castle on the Sea' (Pl. 6) in Newport, Rhode Island and a substantial fortune.<sup>xx</sup> This was the first house in Newport to boast a ballroom, a feature that would become a standard by the end of the century. The contemporary Louis-XV style ballroom (Pl. 7) had been decorated in 1854 for George's father, William Shepherd Wetmore (1801-1862), by New York French émigré cabinetmakers Leon Marcotte (active 1848-1860) and Ringuet LePrince (1801-1886). Dominated by two enormous mirrors purchased at New York's 1853 Exhibition of the Industry of All Nations, this room represented the latest in fashion.<sup>xxi</sup> However, by 1869 when George married Edith Malvina Keteltas (1851-1927), architect Richard Morris Hunt (1827-1895), the first American to graduate from the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, was engaged to remodel and enlarge the house to reflect the most current French, British, and Italian design trends.<sup>xxii</sup> Though the ballroom was to be the only principal room on the first floor of the house not altered, Hunt added spaces that surpassed its luxury. These included: a three-story entrance hall and adjoining grand staircase; a billiard room; a new dining room; and a new library in what had been the house's original dining room.<sup>xxiii</sup> The latter two rooms in particular received special attention. Between 1877 and 1878 the dining room (Pl. 8) and the library (Pl. 9) were

constructed in the Renaissance revival style in the Florentine workshop of Luigi Frullini (1839-1897), who the Wetmores may have personally met on their honeymoon.<sup>xxiv</sup>

Enveloped in richly carved wood and stamped and painted leather, these rooms were assembled in Italy and then disassembled, crated and shipped to Newport where they were installed.<sup>xxv</sup> The American arrival of the Renaissance revival as represented by these two custom-made rooms was clearly praised, as these were the only rooms within Chateau-sur-Mer selected for illustration in the 1884 *Artistic Houses* (Pl. 10 & 11), a limited-edition folio that focused, as stated in the subtitle, on “*the Most Beautiful and Celebrated Homes in the United States...*”<sup>xxvi</sup>

Though the Wetmore rooms were greatly celebrated they were dark and heavy, lacking the sophistication of later Renaissance-inspired American rooms that were yet to come. All the same, they amply represented the development of the ‘American Renaissance,’ an era marked by the United States’ renewed national self-confidence following the Civil War. Once again, as in its founding years, the country saw itself as a new Roman Republic, and this saw a perfusion of classically-inspired artistic expression. This movement ultimately culminated in the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago, Illinois, where the idealism of the era was translated into a concise, nationalistic design vocabulary by architects and artists, such as contributing sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens (1848-1907), who exclaimed to architect Daniel H. Burnham (1846-1912) “[that] this is the greatest meeting of artists since the fifteenth century,” – and, thus, Renaissance Florence.<sup>xxvii</sup>

Of the interiors exemplifying this impressive style, no interior better represented or perpetuated the exuberance of the adaptation of the Italian Renaissance than the

William H. Vanderbilt drawing-room at 640 Fifth Avenue (Pl. 12). As one of the most successful and fully realized emulations of an Italian Palazzo, 640 Fifth Avenue was quickly singled out by critics as representative of the new ambition embodied within the “American residence, seized at the moment when the nation began to have taste of its own.”<sup>xxviii</sup> Despite being mislabeled and the confusion created in ascribing the Vanderbilt drawing-room to the Aesthetic Movement, the interior was the first in a series of heralded interiors, principally drawing-rooms, which utilized a new level of interpretation and connoisseurship to elevate its patron(s)/occupant(s) to the status of near royalty. The significance and role the Vanderbilt drawing-room played in defining this new generation of wealthy Americans would eventually lead to its recognition as nothing short of an icon for late nineteenth century America – and the nation’s ‘Gilded Age.’



## **William H. Vanderbilt's Drawing-Room at 640 Fifth Avenue**

At the end of his life, William H. Vanderbilt (1821-1885) (Pl. 13) was the richest man in the world. His father, Cornelius Vanderbilt (1794-1877), known as 'The Commodore' (Pl. 14), left him at the age of 56 an inheritance of almost \$90,000,000, a fortune primarily built on the success of a steamship and railroad empire. Within the eight years before his own death, William doubled this fortune to nearly \$200,000,000.

William H. Vanderbilt decided to build a new residence almost immediately following the successful conclusion of a dispute over his father's will, with construction beginning in January of 1879.<sup>xxix</sup> For the site of his new house, William purchased a dozen 100 feet deep lots fronting the west side of Manhattan's Fifth Avenue, between Fifty-first and Fifty-second streets. Moving the family's residence uptown from its then current home at 459 Fifth Avenue would set a precedent for others to follow.<sup>xxx</sup>

Fashionable families had until then seen no reason to move from their seats on Washington, Stuyvesant and Madison squares and in the Forties and southward on Fifth Avenue.<sup>xxxi</sup> Indeed, Vanderbilt set a trend that others promptly emulated, fully developing upper Fifth Avenue into one of the most fashionable residential areas in the nation.<sup>xxxii</sup>

Prior to Mr. Vanderbilt's arrival, 'Upper Fifth,' as it was then called was still under developed. A few houses of worship had been erected in the area, including St. Patrick's Cathedral (1850 -79; 1888) and Temple Emmanu-El (1868), but there were few actual residences.<sup>xxxiii</sup> One of the few handsome residential developments was built by Mary Mason Jones (Edith Wharton's aunt and her model for Mrs. Manson Mingott in *The Age of Innocence*). She erected her fashionable Marble Row (Pl.15) between Fifty-

seven and Fifty-eight streets at 734-745 Fifth Avenue, between 1867 - 69.<sup>xxxiv</sup> Her sister, Rebecca Jones, built another fashionable row of townhouses between Fifty-five and Fifty-sixth streets (Pl. 16).<sup>xxxv</sup> However, this did not set the precedent for society leaders to move uptown. This may have been partially due to the flashy Italianate brownstone on the northeastern corner of Fifth Avenue and 51st Street, the home of Mrs. Anne Lohman, the wife of Dr. Lohman. For years Mrs. Lohman, professionally known as Madame Restall, operated what amounted to no more than an abortion clinic out of her mansion, advertising what she called “infallible French female pills,” literally within sight of St. Patrick's Cathedral.<sup>xxxvi</sup> Supposedly, the generally accepted explanation for her immunity from the law was that she had the “goods” on everybody, with her client list including ladies from the height of society. However, after the death of her husband in 1876, rising public opinion finally caught up with her and a warrant for her arrest was issued two years later. After being released on bail, she committed suicide by climbing into a hot bath and slitting either her throat or wrists rather than face disgrace in prison.<sup>xxxvii</sup>

This scandalous affair, sensationalized in the period press, did not deter Mr. Vanderbilt from opting to purchase the entire block front across the street from the late Mme. Restall's still standing residence. He knew a bargain when he saw it. He purchased the property for half a million dollars. This was a bargain considering the former owner had turned down an offer of \$800,000 for the same parcel just prior to the national financial panic of 1873. In making this purchase, Vanderbilt inadvertently followed in the footsteps of the Renaissance Florentine, Cosimo de' Medici (1389 -1464) (Pl. 17), who in 1444 created a stir when he broke with the Florentine tradition of living

on family land by choosing a new site for his family's primary residence. In the process, Cosimo de' Medici had at least twenty smaller houses demolished. It was the Palazzo de Medici (Pl. 18) in Florence which set a precedent for the commissioning of grandiose residences as visual metaphors for wealth and political and social influence during the Renaissance.<sup>xxxviii</sup> Motivated initially by the intense rivalry between the great Florentine families, the Palazzo de Medici became an instant landmark, as the new Vanderbilt residence was to become for New Yorkers and most Americans as well.

Marking the beginning of the American Renaissance, William H. Vanderbilt inadvertently revived the Italian Renaissance's concept of *magnificenza*, literally translated as "magnificence or grandeur." However, in the broader definition it refers to a virtue that raises one's status by using one's wealth to benefit the public, primarily through building campaigns that beautify the cityscape. This was one of the few viable means for people to raise their social status that did not relate to their family lineage. As a virtue, *magnificenza* was also interpreted as a form of religious devotion, a concept largely lost to us today, but extremely critical during the Italian Renaissance, and equally so in late-nineteenth century America. This religious component gave people an acceptable reasoning for spending large sums of money on their own private residences. To date no letters from the period have surfaced that directly acknowledge that wealthy Americans of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were consciously aware of the Renaissance's concept of *magnificenza*, but in their correspondence it is evident that they expressed a similar reasoning for building grand edifices. Admittedly, and as during the Italian Renaissance, not everyone saw the building of grand residences as selfless acts. As late as 1911, well after his death, author Gustavus Myers criticized

William H. Vanderbilt as self-indulgent and ignorant on artistic matters in his book, *History of the Great American Fortunes*. Myers summarized Vanderbilt as someone whose "...expenditure of a few hundred thousand dollars... instantly transformed [him] from a heavy witted, uncultured money hoarder into the character of a surpassing 'judge and patron of art.'"<sup>xxxix</sup> However, in truth the pursuit of *magnificenza* is not completely a selfless act and despite Myers's posthumous commentary, there were few who would have argued Vanderbilt's residence was anything other than a monument to 'good' taste and a treasure to the city when first completed.

Mr. Vanderbilt's motives only slightly varied from the Renaissance's Cosimo de'Medici's. A personal rivalry existed between art connoisseurs as Mr. Vanderbilt was intent on outshining the recently deceased dry-goods merchant Alexander T. Stewart (1803-1876), who had erected a white marble edifice to house his art collection at Thirty-fourth Street and Fifth Avenue (Pl. 19).<sup>xi</sup> More important, Vanderbilt was committed to making a name for himself independent of his father's, and, thus smoothing out his family's reputation neglected by the Commodore.<sup>xii</sup> At the time, 'Society' in New York City was a conservative group, largely consisting of descendents from Old Dutch families - most notably the Astors - who had little interest in increasing their inherited real estate derived fortunes.<sup>xiii</sup> Although the Vanderbilts descended from some of the oldest Dutch families in New York and had never truly been poor, they were still considered 'new money.'<sup>xliii</sup> The Commodore posed the largest consistent barrier to the family's rising social ambitions since he made no attempt to cultivate a better image for himself and was content to swear and remain almost functionally illiterate throughout his entire life.<sup>xliv</sup>

While William H. Vanderbilt saw the need for a new and imposing edifice as a means to raise his family's status, his wife, Maria Louisa Kissman (1821-1896) (Pl. 20), the daughter of a Brooklyn minister, was content with the family's home at 459 Fifth Avenue, on the south-east corner of Fortieth Street, where the family had resided since 1867 and which had recently been redecorated in 1878 by the prestigious firm of Herter Brothers (1864-1906).<sup>xlv</sup> Since their children were grown, she proposed erecting a new addition to provide adequate space for her husband's rapidly growing collection of paintings.<sup>xlvi</sup> This proposal presumably was made in an attempt to imitate what the Astors had just completed. In 1875 William B. Astor II (1830-1892) (Pl. 21) and his wife, Caroline Webster Schermerhorn (1830-1908) (Pl. 22), hired Griffith Thomas (1820-1879) to design an addition to their residence at the south-west corner of Fifth Avenue and West Thirty-fourth Street (Pl.23). One of the most important New York building commissions of the period, the Astor addition was centered around the creation of a "perfectly cubical thirty-five by thirty-five ballroom," which was the impetus behind the formation of New York society's four hundred.<sup>xlvii</sup> This room also doubled as an art gallery (Pl. 24).

Despite his wife's suggestion for expanding their existing residence, Mr. Vanderbilt still pursued building an entirely new residence following Renaissance Florentine palace prototypes, commissioning the acclaimed architectural firm of John B. Snook (1857-1887). Familiar with buildings designed by John Butler Snook (1815-1901) for the Commodore, including his residence at 10 Washington Place and the original Grand Central Terminal at Forty-Second Street and Park Avenue, William probably felt assured that he had chosen the right architect.<sup>xlviii</sup> In addition to Snook, Vanderbilt hired

Charles B. Atwood (1849-1895), an architect employed by the decorating firm of Herter Brothers to handle interior details.<sup>xlix</sup> He also engaged the services of the Herter firm, itself, which was then deemed the most prestigious decorating firm in America to oversee the entire project, apparently pleased with the work they had recently completed for his residence at 459 Fifth Avenue.<sup>l</sup> Snook's proposal established the outlines for a complex of three separate residences housed within a near pair of pavilions clad in New York brownstone connected by a shared entryway (Pl. 25), instead of one single structure.<sup>li</sup> The southern of the two pavilions, to be known as 640 Fifth Avenue, would be the residence for William H. Vanderbilt and his wife and home for his internationally renowned art collection. The mirroring pavilion would be reminiscent of the Palazzo de Strozzi in Florence (Pl. 26), being visually one unit but in reality a duplex consisting of two separate residences. Where Florentine banker Filippo Strozzi (1489-1538) constructed his palace duplex for his two sons and their families, William H. Vanderbilt constructed his for two of his married daughters and their families, Mrs. William Douglas Sloane (1852-1946) at 642 Fifth Avenue and Mrs. Elliott Fitch Shepard (1845-1925) at 2 West Fifty-Fourth Street (Pl. 27).<sup>lii</sup> All three, Vanderbilt, Sloane, and Shepard residences were completed in 1882 and as a whole it became commonly known as the Triple Palaces (Pl. 28).<sup>liii</sup> In total the project took between six and seven hundred men working for almost two years, two hundred-fifty workers hired solely to execute the interiors.<sup>liv</sup> Unfortunately, the building received dim reviews from critics, with one commenting: "It is a marvel that so well constructed buildings [sic] should appear so ineffective....Strictly speaking, there is a conspicuous absence of architectural design."<sup>lv</sup> The interiors, however, would prove a different matter.

With a layout derived from Florentine palace models, and led by the Palazzo de Medici, all the rooms in the Vanderbilt house were located off a central courtyard transformed by Snook into a three-story, glass-roofed atrium, with the upper two levels serving as gallery space for the overflow of Mr. Vanderbilt's ever expanding art collection. This replicated the Palazzo de Medici, where the court yard served as a large display area for works of art.

One of the most significant and visually impressive rooms in the house was the drawing-room, situated between the library and 'Japanese' parlor, counter balancing the art gallery across the atrium (Pl. 29). The drawing-room (Pl. 30) served as the center stage of the ground floor public reception rooms with its doorways framed with portieres that once belonged to the Duc du Maine, "treated in the style of Le Burn or Rubens" (Pl. 31).<sup>lvi</sup> Inside the room, the "massive frames of the three doorways [were] elaborately carved and encrusted with gold," with "flying genii, similar to those seen in museums on Roman sarcophagi of the later periods, hover[ing] at the upper corners" (Pl. 32).<sup>lvii</sup> The room was nothing short of a spectacle. In fact, despite the drawing-room's comparative small scale - measuring only 35 x 21 feet and 16 feet high in comparison to the nearby art gallery of 32 X 48 feet and 30 feet high (Pl. 33) - the room successfully functioned as both a place for people to mingle as well as a place where Mr. Vanderbilt could display selected treasures from his celebrated collections.<sup>lviii</sup> Deliberately designed to impress, this room featured a unique aesthetic that incorporated elements largely inspired by the Italian Renaissance, executed in exotic and costly materials, most notably mother-of-pearl and gold. It made a bold statement about the wealth, taste, and status of its patron. In *Mr. Vanderbilt's House and Collections*, privately printed by William to

illustrate and reaffirm his “good” taste, the author and art critique Earl Shinn, writing under the pseudonym of Edward Strahan, noted that the drawing-room at 640 “sparkles and flashes with golden color.... with mother of pearl, with marble, with jewel effects in glass.. and every surface is covered, one might say weighted with ornament.”<sup>lix</sup> The overriding theme of the decoration was a visual parable to Europe’s past, but a romanticized past. There were knights in shining armor, beautiful maidens, exotic plants, and wild creatures of the forest incorporated into the wall and ceiling decorations that represented an idealized medieval Europe promoted by Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812-1852), like the mythical realm of King Arthur and the legend of Camelot.

One of the most impressionable elements of the room was a mesmerizing upholstered wall treatment installed above a gilded wainscot with mother-of-pearl inlay (Pl. 34). It consisted of:

“...red velvet, profusely embroidered, and studded with cut crystals of every shade; these variegated flashes of jewelry are introduced in the figures of butterflies applied to the stuff, and seemingly attracted to the profuse bowers of embroidered blossoms, which cluster in arches just under the cornice leaving the center spaces of the panels bare in their crimson breadths.”<sup>lix</sup>

This is one of the earliest documented uses of such ornamental textiles in an American residence. Shortly after the house was completed in 1882, Pittsburg steel magnate Henry Clay Frick (1849-1919) (Pl. 35), who was enamored by William H. Vanderbilt’s house when he first saw it after returning from Europe, chose a similar textile of a burgundy velvet embroidered with mother-of-pearl spangles and applied silver thread for the frieze in the parlor for his Pittsburgh residence, Clayton (Pl.36).<sup>lxi</sup>



Interestingly, despite the involvement of Herter Brothers, none of the furniture supplied by the firm appears to have been designed by either of its established tastemakers and namesakes, Gustave Herter (1830-1898) or Christian Herter (1839-1883).<sup>lxii</sup> Instead, as was apparently customary for the time, the firm contractually employed a number of designers and craftsman, with the out-sourced designs credited to the overseeing firm. The three men largely ascribed to the Vanderbilt interior in *Mr. Vanderbilt's House and Collections* were M. Charles Kreutzberger, M. Charles Goutzwiller, and M. R. Marcelle Lambert. Though little is known about these men, one of the firm's namesakes, Christian Herter, who had taken over the business from his older brother in 1870, is known to have overseen the William H. Vanderbilt project along with William Baumgarten (1845-1908), recorded as being hired in 1871 as general manager assistant.<sup>lxiii</sup> Work seems to have moved smoothly since the house was completed in only two and a half years; a short span considering the scale and amount of detail involved in the project.<sup>lxiv</sup> During this time no contracts were made, breaking with the firm's standard protocol. Instead Mr. Vanderbilt visited Herter Brothers almost daily to see the furniture being made and paying the bills when presented, trusting the firm. Despite the disruption these visits could have caused, William Vanderbilt seems to have been an ideal patron enthusiastic about the project, as Baumgarten later recalled shortly after the house's completion:

"We have rarely had a customer who took such a personal interest in the work during its progress. All the designs were submitted to him from the first stone to the last piece of decoration or furniture. Mr. Vanderbilt was at our warerooms or our shops almost every day for a year. He spent hours in the designed rooms, and often looked on while the workmen were busy or in the shops."<sup>lxv</sup>

The principal pieces of furniture Herter Brothers supplied for the drawing-room were the upholstered seating pieces as well as a few tables. The best known of the Herter pieces were the gilt and mother-of-pearl inlaid side chairs (Pl. 37). Loosely derived from 18th-century European seating forms, these chairs with deer-like hooved feet offered a montage of exoticism through the addition of “applied jewel like ornament in mother-of-pearl,” carved gilded Egyptian cobra, and flared backs derived from Chinese architecture, all complemented by crimson silk upholstery embroidered with Chinese dragons.<sup>lxvi</sup> Though period photographs of the interior show only two chairs together, three chairs of this form are known to have survived.<sup>lxvii</sup>

Two other forms of side chair appear in illustrations of the room (Pl. 38 & 39). From plates in *Mr. Vanderbilt's House the Collection*, both adhere to the same general form of the previously discussed chairs. Both appear to have been gilded and ornamented with mother-of-pearl inlays. One model had tapering legs ending in “cuff” turnings above conical feet, as well as a back with a carved central splat, a gilded carved swag uniting the splat with the stiles, and a dark green or blue embroidered upholstery. (Pl. 38).<sup>lxviii</sup> The other model, exclusively documented to the room's southeast corner, near the bay window, had a related back splat, but with its mother-of-pearl inlay in the form of a shield (Pl. 39). It was supported by comparatively squat turned feet and covered with a heavier upholstery treatment consisting of a trellis fringe and overstuffed seat in a manner similar to that incorporated in a large suite of Turkish-style seating furniture for the same room; photographs show this group consisted of at least four arm chairs and two banquettes.<sup>lxix</sup>

Additionally Herter Brothers also supplied a set of eight African 'onyx' pedestals (Pl. 40) in the form of columns studded with red crystals, topped with gilt Corinthian capitals incorporating phoenix's heads that supported gold cages, some with gas jets.<sup>lxx</sup> A D-shaped gilt and mother-of-pearl inlaid console table with a matching onyx top was also supplied by the firm (Pl. 41).<sup>lxxi</sup> This console's top was supported by a conglomeration of three tear drop-shaped carved cylindrical legs on the front; three square tapering legs on the back; a register of mother-of-pearl inlaid columns framing two pairs of winged lions - each independently supporting a cornucopia; and a grotesque satyr mask adorned plinth. This continued the Italian theme of the room with the lions referencing the winged guardians of Venice's St. Mark's Basilica - the symbol of the Renaissance province of *Serenissima Repubblica di Venezia* or the Most Serene Republic of Venice (Pl. 42) and the masks harkening back to Roman antiquity.<sup>lxxii</sup>

A related center table, with a mother-of-pearl top (Pl. 43) stood slightly off center of the room, was designed by one of the three designers working under contract with Herter Brothers, M. R. Marcelle Lambert, who also designed the carved window lintels and door frames.<sup>lxxiii</sup> Derived from an Italian Renaissance trestle table, the frame was ornamented with carved satyr masks on the corners and had a central drawer and ornate mother-of-pearl panels on the opposing short ends. The table's base was carved in the Egyptian taste, ending in a pair of human feet, and having an architectural central stretcher that included miniature biform window frames and balustrade.<sup>lxxiv</sup> Despite the impact this table must have had, the eyes of visitors were no doubt directed to what was displayed on top. Period accounts noted a vitrine in the center of the table that contained one of two ivory statuettes in the room by the celebrated French sculptor

Augustin Moreau-Vauthier (1831-1893). These works were singled out as a tour de force of their art as well as their subject matter, which was considered “thoroughly elegant, refined and artistic, without deep mythological meanings to disturb the equipoise of the evening caller.”<sup>lxxv</sup> The statuette on the table was entitled *Fortuna* or *Abondance* (Pl. 44), and depicted an allegory of “Fortune,” with a classically clad female figure “pois[ed] on a globe of turquoise blue, with various supporting figures and attributes.”<sup>lxxvi</sup> It was a reduced version of the artist’s life-size bronze exhibited at the 1883 Paris Triennial Exhibition, carved out of a single piece of ivory, and measuring over nineteen inches in height.<sup>lxxvii</sup>

The other statuette by Vauthier depicted Cupid (Pl. 45) and it stood on a “pedestal of trifling height, measure[ing] an altitude of nineteen inches” with his right arm held out “balancing one of his arrows in the guise of a dart.”<sup>lxxviii</sup> One of the marvels of this piece was its craftsmanship with the “joining in the ivory...hard to detect.”<sup>lxxix</sup> It was placed in a vitrine designed to stand upon an Italianate side table supported by winged caryatids and scroll feet, probably supplied by Herter Brothers (Pl. 46). Surrounded by a treasure trove of richly inlaid and enameled snuff boxes, etuis, and miniature portraits, all purchased from impoverished members of the royal families of Europe, the display rivaled those within the private museums in Europe, such as Milan’s Poldi-Pezzoli Museum.<sup>lxxx</sup>

Additional tables for the room were supplied by another firm, the Parisian foundry of Barbedienne (1838-1952), founded by Ferdinand Barbedienne (1810-1892) (Pl. 47) and Achille Collas (1794-1859) (Pl. 48). Gustave Herter had begun a tradition of subcontracting work from such firms and artists as needed. Usually these items were

either of a type of manufacture not typically undertaken by Herter Brothers or deemed too costly for the firm to undertake the work themselves. Gustave's younger half-brother, Christian, continued such collaborations and established a working relationship with Ferdinand Barbedienne, who had taken full ownership of the foundry after his partner's death.<sup>lxxxix</sup> The earliest of these pieces was a clock made in 1867 "design[ed] by [Christian] Herter and Constant Sevin and executed by F. Barbedienne" for hardware merchant and manufacturer Henry Probasco (1820-1902).<sup>lxxxii</sup> Louis-Constant Sevin (1821-1880) was an independent artisan who began as a designer of ornamental metal work in 1839. From 1855 until his death, he held the position of *sculpteur-ornemaniste* for Barbedienne. Designing in a variety of historical styles he was responsible for a number of exhibition pieces for the foundry that were intended to captivate the public and demonstrate the firm's design abilities and level of craftsmanship.<sup>lxxxiii</sup> The majority of Barbedienne's creations, however, were dedicated to the manufacture of copies of antique or Renaissance works (Pl. 49).<sup>lxxxiv</sup>

While many of these art bronzes wound up being mounted as clocks by makers such as Susse Freres, for William H. Vanderbilt's house, Barbedienne would be responsible for the full scale replica of Lorenzo Ghiberti's *Gates of Paradise* in the Baptistery of Florence that served as an impressive entrance for the Vanderbilts' vestibule (Pl. 50).<sup>lxxxv</sup> Not originally commissioned by William H. Vanderbilt, the gates were acquired by his daughter, Mrs. Elliott Shepard (formerly Margaret Louisa Vanderbilt), in 1880 for \$20,000 at the sale of Prince Demidoff's palace at San Donato, near Florence as a gift for her father, who subsequently had the gates gilded.<sup>lxxxvi</sup> The acquisition of the gates may have been influenced by Baltimorian William Thompson

Walters' *Gates of Paradise*, ordered directly from Barbedienne in 1879, which the Vanderbilts could have seen on their tour of Barbedienne's ateliers in that very year.<sup>lxxxvii</sup>

Ferdinand Barbedienne was also known for high quality enameled decorative art objects. Selected as one of the jurists alongside the preeminent French artist, Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824-1904), for the great expositions held to demonstrate various firms' designs and capabilities, Barbedienne also repeatedly participated by exhibiting items including a group of champlevé enamels and decorative objects at the 1862 London International Exhibition (Pl. 51), and a gilt bronze mirror with chased figures at the 1867 Paris Exposition Universelle (Pl. 52).<sup>lxxxviii</sup> As writer Theodore Child recorded in an interview with Ferdinand Barbedienne for the September 1886 issue of Harper's *New Monthly Magazine*: "the imitation of exotic forms is not what we need to seek in our study of Chinese and Japanese art, but rather the secrets of their exquisite colorations of enamel, of their perfect castings, other method of inlaying metal upon metal, other free and firm chiseling, and of their mysterious alloys employed."<sup>lxxxix</sup> Despite their work being consistently compared to that from Japan and China, Barbedienne's enamels were repeatedly described as being of "Persian architectural designs," though at the time the same patterns and designs were thought of as Moresque ornament in an early 16<sup>th</sup>-century Venetian manner, and similar to the patterns used to adorn lavish book bindings of the period.<sup>xc</sup> As one of Barbedienne's greatest virtues, the avoidance of "severely copying" Japanese and Chinese enamel enabled the foundry to create works that were seen not as imitations, but innovative assimilations of several designs, color schemes and patterns assessed as representing a variety of nationalities.<sup>xci</sup> It was probably works like these that William H. Vanderbilt and other members of his family

saw when they visited Barbedienne's ateliers (Pl. 53) with their art agent, George Lucas (1857-1909), on June 10, 1880.<sup>xcii</sup>

Specially commissioned from Barbedienne for William H. Vanderbilt's Drawing-Room was a pair of 'pearl' cabinets "inlaid with mother-of-pearl in a framework of gold, and bearing five Limoges enamels by [the notable French enamellist, Paul-Louis Alfred Serre [act. 1870-85?]]."<sup>xciii</sup> Such cabinets had become fashionable in Florence toward the end of the sixteenth century and were often lavishly decorated.<sup>xciv</sup> Perhaps the most splendid example of such cabinets is a pair with panels of *pietra dura* and reliefs of stone inlay made by Italian craftsman Domenico Cucci (1635-1704-5) in 1683 for Louis XIV (dates) at Versailles (Pl. 54).<sup>xcv</sup> Purchased in 1822 by the Third Duke of Northumberland from London's Robert Fogg for a phenomenal 2,000 guineas, a great deal of money at the time, the Cucci cabinets were placed in the Red Drawing-room at Alwick Castle, Northumberland, England.<sup>xcvi</sup> As prime specimens of parade furniture, made to be seen from the front, with nobody bothered with how they were constructed the physical carcasses of the pieces made of timber were essentially crudely constructed. The presence of such cabinets in a late nineteenth century American interior would not have been surprising as such pieces had influenced a great number of cabinets made for the great expositions in the later part of the century that were highly publicized. At the London Exhibition of 1862 leading Paris ébéniste Henri Fourdinois (1830-1907) was awarded a prize for an ebony cabinet that towered over 8 feet high and was ornamented with ivory, lapis, bloodstone, jasper and carvings by M. Megret (dates unknown) (Pl. 55).<sup>xcvii</sup> At the same exposition, Barbedienne exhibited a piece of furniture made of ebony in the Renaissance revival style ornamented with

bronze and finished to give the effect of oxidized silver (Pl. 56).<sup>xcviii</sup> Barbedienne also participated in the Paris International Exposition of 1878 where a carved side cabinet by Luigi Frullini (1839-1897) of Florence with small panels of birds was shown, and which appears remarkably similar to the 'pearl' cabinets supplied by Barbedienne for William H. Vanderbilt.<sup>xcix</sup>

Barbedienne was also responsible for a number of elaborate tables in Mr. Vanderbilt's drawing-room, "all of which [were] experimentations in design" that were described as to have not "failed from any restrictions of cost, [that] support plate-glass cases, as transparent as possible, in which [was] protected a host of costly trifles, besides the ivories [by Augustin Moreau-Vauthier] above mentioned."<sup>c</sup> Two of these tables were identical and were loosely Renaissance revival in style, later interpreted as 'Louis XVI,' and were made of gilt chased bronze and marble. Signed F. Barbedienne, Paris, they had a "rectangular top of *griotte*\* marble rimmed in *bronze dore*, and fitted with... separate vitrine cabinet[s]..." supported by "...tapering legs enriched with leaf and imbricated ornament, and connected by [an] incurvate stretcher to two center legs" (Pl. 57).<sup>ci</sup> These tables however were passed over by Earl Shinn in his commentary on the room, though they were used to display a variety of bric-a-brac, including Chinese and Japanese ceramics and objet d'art made of rock crystal "picked up in scant hours of leisure among the curiosity-shops of European cities."<sup>cii</sup> (Some of these trinkets were probably those recorded by George Lucas as being shipped to the States after being purchased by William H. Vanderbilt, himself, on a trip to Europe with several members of his family in 1880.<sup>ciii</sup>)

\* A French marble from the French Pyrenees of a beautiful red color and often variegated with small dashes of purple and spots or streaks of white.



Barbeienne's true *tour de force* within the Vanderbilt drawing-room was "a *cloisonné* enamel cabinet... with double doors and [arabesque framed shelves], standing on an elegant table of fire gilt-bronze or *or-molu*," designed by M. Charles Goutzwiller, which stood in the bay window alcove (Pl. 58-60).<sup>civ</sup> In the Persian taste, the two doors concealed "two tiers of four small drawers, surrounded by prayer niches; on pendant-hung gadrooned feet."<sup>cv</sup> In the arched niches were eight ivory figures.<sup>cvi</sup> Atop the cabinet sat a Renaissance revival drinking horn framed by enameled silver mounts.<sup>cvii</sup> The "top, sides, front, and interior [of the cabinet were] all elaborately decorated with cloisonné enamel panels symmetrically arranged with floral medallions in diapered backgrounds of varying contrasting colors."<sup>cviii</sup>

To illuminate all of this, revolutionary electric lighting was installed in the Vanderbilt house by the inventor, Thomas Edison (1847-1931), himself. As the first centralized New York power plant was not constructed until 1882, an onsite generator, probably powered by a steam engine, was installed in the house's basement, but was promptly removed after testing. As Edison would later recall:

"About 8 o'clock in the evening we lit it up and it was very good. Mr. Vanderbilt, his wife and some of his daughters came in and were there a few minutes when a fire occurred. The large picture gallery was lined with silk cloth interwoven with fine metallic tinsel. In some manner, two wires had got crossed with the tinsel, which became red-hot and the whole wall was soon afire ... [the fire was put out] ... Mrs. Vanderbilt became hysterical and wanted to know where it came from. We told her we had the plant in the cellar, and when she learned we had a boiler there, she said she would not occupy the house; she would not live over a boiler. We had to take the whole installation out."<sup>cix</sup>

As a result of the failed attempt with electric lights and fear of the boiler exploding, gas jets were installed. In each of the drawing-room's rounded corner recesses light was projected by "an elaborate arrangement of [beveled] mirrors and

silver statues” containing multiple gas jets (Pl. 34).<sup>cx</sup> The overall effect was recorded as appearing “almost like ice-grottoes,” with the silver figures of young women or nymphs “somewhat smaller than life” standing on a sphere delicately holding a torchere in each hand (Pl. 61). These were designed by a Charles David, who also designed the railing on the balconies on the exterior of the Vanderbilt house.<sup>cx</sup> Through research, the inspiration for these torcheres can be attributed to a bronze figure of a bacchant discovered in Pompeii that was illustrated in a catalogue of the collection of the National Museum of Naples that was published in 1865 (Pl. 62).<sup>cxii</sup>

It is debatable whether these glowing corners were designed by either M. L. Libonis or M. Charles Goutzwiller, or if the conception was a collaborative effort as Shinn acknowledged both gentlemen independently in the captions of illustration in his four volume record of the house and its contents. Either way, the general reception of the effect was greatly praised.<sup>cxiii</sup> One newspaper reporter wrote:

“When the lights are burning its splendor is akin to the gorgeous dreams of [an] oriental fantasy; and yet with all this dazzling opulence there is no hint of tawdriness. The effect has been perfectly massed, and the profuse decorations are harmonized with consummate taste.”<sup>cxiv</sup>

The “artistic attraction” of the completed Vanderbilt room, however, was the domed ceiling painted by Pierre-Victor Galland (French, 1822-1892) that unified the space (Pl. 63).<sup>cxv</sup> A painter not known for his ‘easel-pictures,’ but rather murals, his clients included Baron Rothschild in London, Prince Nariskine of Russia and American millionaire LeGrand Lockwood.<sup>cxvi</sup> Galland’s composition for William H. Vanderbilt was seen as being “in the artist’s best style,” having an atmosphere reminiscent of Raphael’s “*The Banquet of the Gods, Ceiling Painting of the Courtship and Marriage of Cupid and Psyche*” (Pl. 64), commissioned by Agostino Andrea Chigi (1466-1520) for the second

story loggia at the Chigi Villa, now the Villa Farnesina, Rome.<sup>cxvii</sup> Entitled the *Fête*, Galland depicted a “never-ending frieze of personages whose procession winds around the coves...” with a knight going to joust, “gallant, noble and sedate; ... he rises to the heights of medieval purity and distinction among the lovely dame's, each fit for the queen of a love-parliament, over whose delicate heads is lifted the standard, ‘Plus que valeur, beaute triomphe.’”<sup>\* cxviii</sup>

Commissioned along the same lines as the ceiling paintings of Jules Joseph Lefebvre (1836-1911) for other rooms in William H. Vanderbilt's house, the drawing-room ceiling painting commission was handled by William H. Vanderbilt's art agent in Paris, George Lucas.<sup>cxix</sup> Lucas, acting as middle man, took William H. Vanderbilt to the Salon to meet Lefebvre while he was in Paris in 1879. The intention of the meeting was to convince William H. Vanderbilt to commission Lefebvre to paint “a picture of 4 to 5 figures...for 50,000 fs...” for his bedroom ceiling which needed to be completed by March of 1880 (Pl. 65).<sup>cxx</sup> By May, Lefebvre had presented a proposal for the painting, which Vanderbilt subsequently approved (Pl. 66).<sup>cxxi</sup> Apparently the client was so pleased by the artist's efforts and work that he commissioned a portrait of one of his daughters in June followed by another commission in August for another large canvas for the ceiling of Mrs. Vanderbilt's bedroom (Pl. 67).<sup>cxxii</sup> Eventually William H. Vanderbilt would acquire three more works from Lefebvre, which he proudly displayed in his art gallery.<sup>cxxiii</sup> Galland, however, seems to have had some difficulty in fulfilling his commission, which involved completing four large canvases needed to cover the ceiling. From May 11, 1881 to January 26, 1882, when the finished paintings were sent to New

\* translates to “More than value, beauty triumph.”

York to be installed in the drawing-room, William H. Vanderbilt and George Lucas both had paid Galland several visits to find the paintings' progress running behind schedule.<sup>cxxiv</sup> As a result, despite the praise Galland's painting received, he received no other commissions from William H. Vanderbilt.

To install the ceiling paintings the Parisian decorating firm of Jules Allard et Fils (1878-1906) was hired. As a result, Jules Allard et Fils received their first American commission when William H. Vanderbilt hired them to furnish Mrs. Vanderbilt's bedroom, which included the installation of the ceiling painting by Lefebvre.<sup>cxxv</sup> Prior to 1885 when Jules Allard et Fils opened a branch in New York, William H. Vanderbilt had called on them during his trips to Paris and had placed orders for items for his new house as early as June of 1881.<sup>cxxvi</sup>

After William H. Vanderbilt's sudden death at the age of sixty-four on December 4, 1885, his widow and their son George Washington Vanderbilt (1862-1914) continued to inhabit the house. After Mrs. Vanderbilt passed away in 1896, ownership transferred to George, their only child not to have built a New York house of his own. At the age of 23, George inherited both William Henry Vanderbilt's 640 Fifth Avenue residence as well as his Staten Island farm.<sup>cxxvii</sup> Stricken by the construction cost of his own new home, Biltmore, in Ashville, North Carolina, which he had begun in 1887, George ultimately leased the Manhattan residence to Henry Clay Frick in 1905. During his occupancy, Frick spent over \$100,000 to 'improve' 640 Fifth Avenue, largely remodeling the façade.<sup>cxxviii</sup> When his ten year lease ran out in 1915, the house was turned over to Cornelius Vanderbilt III (Neily; 1873-1942), the disinherited eldest son of his older brother Cornelius II, per the will of William H. Vanderbilt.<sup>cxxix</sup> Neily's wife Grace Wilson

(1870?-1953), who he married in 1899, was not particularly thrilled with the house, describing the furnished whole as “The Black Hole of Calcutta.”<sup>cxxx</sup> Soon thereafter, preliminary plans for lavish alterations were drawn up by Horrace Trumbauer (1869-1938). Taking almost two years and at a cost of half a million dollars, the exterior ornament was further stripped and the interiors completely redecorated in the French classical taste.<sup>cxxxi</sup>

Despite William H. Vanderbilt’s beloved house’s landmark status, 640 Fifth Avenue succumbed to full demolition in 1945.<sup>cxxxii</sup> It had been the first of the famous ‘Vanderbilt Row’ and the last of those mansions to fall to the wrecking ball. Its concept represented the ambition of an era – America’s Gilded Age. Its physical creation marked a turning point in American design. Indeed, William H. Vanderbilt’s house, and specifically, his celebrated drawing-room directly served nearly two decades as a model for emulation- an ideal for conveying wealth, power, and social position. Afterward, that same drawing-room remained influential in defining the quality of work and caliber of collecting expected in the formulation of houses for America’s elite.

## **The Venetian Princess Across the Street**

At the height of America's Gilded Age it was an opportune time to be young, wealthy and ambitious. Still the Vanderbilts had to work and plot their way to win over New York's bluebloods and then work even harder to secure such acceptance. While the Commodore was too busy making money to concern himself with social standing his son and his children - the third generation of Vanderbilts - would make the family's name synonymous with the era's high life as well as refined taste and respectability. It was this third generation of Vanderbilts that saw itself as America's nobility, an extension of the nobility of Europe, if not by blood then by the privilege of wealth and property. William H. Vanderbilt's children would be the first to be influenced by his building campaign since, as family, they were privileged to experience firsthand the creation of his most important building project, his primary residence at 640 Fifth Avenue. As family, they had intimate knowledge and access to William H. Vanderbilt's assembled network of designers, artisans and craftsman. No one would be more greatly influenced via this firsthand experience than William H. Vanderbilt's daughter-in-law, Alva Smith Vanderbilt (1853-1933) (Pl. 68).

Born Alva Erskine Smith on January 17, 1853 in Mobile, Alabama, she married William H. Vanderbilt's second oldest son, William Kissam Vanderbilt (1849-1920) (Pl. 69) on April 20, 1875.<sup>cxxxiii</sup> Her father, Murray Forbes Smith, had been a lawyer until he married Alva's mother, the daughter of War of 1812 hero, General Robert Desha (1791-1849), at which time he began managing his father-in-law's cotton-based business. Just prior to the outbreak of the Civil War he purchased a house at 40 Fifth Avenue for business purposes, recognizing the emerging importance of mainly northern owned

railroads in transporting cotton from the South. As the Civil War continued, life for Southerners in New York became increasingly uncomfortable, and the prospects for shipping cotton from General Desha's plantation equally difficult. Financially strained due to the war, Mr. Smith sent his wife and daughter to Paris while he tried to earn a living in Liverpool.<sup>cxxxiv</sup> Eventually with little success abroad, the Smith family returned to New York where Alva met William K. Vanderbilt at a dance.<sup>cxxxv</sup>

Unlike his grandfather or father, William K. Vanderbilt, or Willie as he was often called, was well educated. He attended boarding school in Switzerland, at a time when even the wealthiest established American families could not afford such luxury. He became fluent in French at an early age and was a connoisseur of European culture. As a wealthy American studying abroad, he studied with the sons of European nobility, subsequently traveling in the highest social circles. However, in New York, he would be snubbed with the rest the Vanderbilt family by Caroline Astor and the tight-knit society of New York.<sup>cxxxvi</sup>

Willie's 1874 marriage to Alva was ideal, or at least in the beginning before their divorce in 1895.<sup>cxxxvii</sup> They had much in common. Both had: lived in Europe; become avid Francophiles who spoke fluent French; and desired acceptance in New York society. More important, each had something the other needed to achieve their respective social ambitions. Alva's family had fallen on hard times after the Civil War, but she had an impeccable pedigree - as the granddaughter of General Desha - and had an established network of social connections. This began with childhood summers in exclusive Newport, Rhode Island, a customary destination of key Southern families in antebellum America.<sup>cxxxviii</sup> Willie on the other hand was the son of the richest man in the

world, but lacked a respectable family pedigree due to the scandalous reputation of his grandfather, The Commodore.<sup>cxxxix</sup> The other promising aspect of their union was that Alva was also immensely liked by her soon to be father-in-law, William H. Vanderbilt, who liked her looks and spunk.<sup>cxl</sup> As a couple, Willie and Alva quickly became acceptable players in the New York social scene, being invited to the Patriarchs Ball, one of the most significant annual social gatherings in New York.<sup>cxli</sup>

In attempt to raise his own social position at the same time William H. Vanderbilt was building the iconic 640 Fifth Avenue residence, Willie announced construction plans for a house on a one hundred-foot wide lot on the northwest corner of Fifth Avenue and Fifty-Second Street, right across the street from his father's house.<sup>cxlii</sup> While William H. Vanderbilt stayed clear of Richard Morris Hunt's Paris-born, avant-garde style, Francophiles Willie and Alva were immediately enamored with it. However, hiring Hunt was not without thought. Hunt was, after all, the first American architect to have graduated from the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. He was also one of a few respected American architects having served as jurist at several world's fairs, including the 1867 Paris Exposition and the 1876 Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia.<sup>cxliii</sup> Later, he would be referred to as the "Father of Architecture in America," as he would train a number of America's most illustrious architects of the next generation. This recognition would lead to his appointment as the President of the Board of Architects for the 1893 Chicago World's Columbian Exposition – the century's most influential international exhibition regarding civic architecture and urban planning.<sup>cxliiv</sup> Yet more important to Willie and Alva was the fact that Hunt had already proven himself a worthy architect and someone easy to get along with. Only a few years earlier Hunt designed for Willie and Alva a



Queen Anne-style country house in Oakdale, Long Island called Idle Hour (Pl. 70), completed in 1879.<sup>cxlv</sup>

Regarding the new house at 660 Fifth Avenue, Alva purportedly said: “I don't care what it is so long as it is medieval.”<sup>cxlvi</sup> After developing and preparing a number of designs in various historical styles, Hunt presented them all to his clients. After much debate and with Hunt's masterful guidance, they selected the one in the French Renaissance style of Francis I (Pl. 71).<sup>cxlvii</sup> Some saw the design as a precise copy of a French Château. In reality, Hunt had developed an original composition taking elements from several historical structures and integrating them into a new concept - a method common of Beaux-Arts-trained architects. Inspired by the architectural legacy of the Renaissance, Hunt adapted various historical elements to fit the needs of a “powerful American family of the industrial age.”<sup>cxlviii</sup> The main inspiration behind the Vanderbilts' new home was in fact the Château de Blois (Pl. 72), a famous and popular stop for American tourists in France.<sup>cxlix</sup> This is supported by the fact that almost from the beginning Alva referred to her new residence as the “little Château de Blois.”<sup>cl</sup> Some of Alva and Willie's friends, however, attributed the Hôtel de Jacques Coeur in Bourges, the home of a vastly wealthy fifteenth century French banker with a humble background as the prototype. Noted only after the house's completion, this was more than likely a witty reference to the Vanderbilt's social aspirations.<sup>cli</sup>

While their ambitions equaled one another's, Alva became the driving force behind the new residence by default. Though Willie was interested in the project he was preoccupied with business matters, and Alva was subsequently encouraged by her father-in-law to take the lead. As the project proceeded and time passed, Willie's role

became payer of bills while Alva almost exclusively met with Hunt to discuss the plans.<sup>clii</sup> Alva would later recall that she and Hunt often found themselves “pondering over drawings of the great buildings of Europe, fascinated with every detail and determined to reproduce in this modern city of the New World [New York] a structure that would recall the sure inspiration of the old-world builders.”<sup>cliii</sup> She recalled her relationship with Hunt as “one of the greatest companionships of [her] life,” noting that she encountered a level of inspiration “that only comes from contact with greatness.” This same feeling possessed her to the point of exclaiming how she “wanted to put [her] whole soul into the construction of the house on Fifty-Second Street.”<sup>cliv</sup> Hunt’s feelings for Alva Vanderbilt mirrored hers for him, according to Catherine Howland Hunt, the architect’s daughter. He is said to have “had the greatest admiration for [her] intellect and broad grasp of architecture and often said: she’s a wonder.”<sup>clv</sup> However the two did not always agree. At one point, Hunt shouted: “Damm it, Mrs. Vanderbilt, who is building this house?” She replied: “Damm it, Mr. Hunt, who’s going to live in it?” Alva Vanderbilt always insisted on making things her own and doing things the way she wanted, something that her husband’s money enabled her to do.<sup>clvi</sup> In fact, throughout her life, she would build numerous houses, aspiring for the best in everything and immersing herself in every detail of their respective constructions.<sup>clvii</sup>

After two years, the “little Château de Blois” at 660 Fifth Avenue was completed (Pl. 73). Rising from the street like a medieval castle, its massive turrets suggested a different form of grandeur compared to Willie’s father’s Florentine Renaissance-inspired brownstone house across the street. However, like William H. Vanderbilt’s 640 Fifth Avenue, 660 Fifth Avenue was more than just a residence; it was constructed as a

symbol of economic power equivalent to the Medici Palace in Florence. The exterior of the house was clad in Indiana limestone with large flat planes left unadorned to visually balance the profusion of sensuously carved French Renaissance–inspired foliage that surrounded the windows, doorways, and balustrades (Pl. 74). This ornate new look established a precedent for a host of future imitators, something Alva, later proudly acknowledged in an unpublished autobiography; “My house was the death of the brownstone front.”<sup>clviii</sup>

Within the house, Alva’s father-in-law’s influence was clearly evident, though sometimes more in applied philosophy or employ of specifications than actual replication of décor. Immediately to the right of the main hall was the library. John Van Pelt, who documented 660 Fifth Avenue just prior to its 1926 demolition, recounted how the library first appeared based on interviews of some of the original workmen prior to the room being redecorated by Robert W. Chanler (1872-1930) and painted French Louis XV paneling installed. Initially dark, the library was fitted with French Walnut paneling believed to have been designed by Hunt and executed by Herter Brothers, William H. Vanderbilt’s favorite interior decorators.<sup>clix</sup> From Hunt’s surviving original drawing for the room (Pl. 75) that were included in Van Pelt’s 1925 monograph on the house, it is clear that the room was strongly influenced by William H. Vanderbilt’s Renaissance-inspired drawing-room at 640 Fifth Avenue.<sup>clx</sup> The coved ceiling and use of Renaissance motifs, including bi-fore window glazed fronts for the bookcases and a caryatid-supported mantel like those in the Salon at Alnwick Castle, represented a new approach to interpreting the Italian Renaissance in New York. This design shift could also be attributed to Herter Brothers, whose breadth of offerings as designers was

unrivaled. However, since the library is reputed to have been designed by Hunt, this room was probably the result of his collaboration with Alva, who was being kept up to date on 640 Fifth Avenue's progress by her father-in-law.<sup>clxi</sup> Most likely, the end result was an amalgamation of all of these factors.

Willie's younger brother, Frederick Vanderbilt (1856-1938), who preferred the more masculine Renaissance revival style developed by his father, used Herter Brothers on several occasions for the purpose of establishing his own social stage. For Frederick's homes in New York City, Hyde Park, New York, and Newport, Rhode Island, the Herter firm was almost always engaged as the lead tastemakers, and this may shed some light on what Willie and Alva had in their own library at 660 Fifth Avenue. Like Willie and Alva, Frederick relied upon his father's talented network of craftsman and designers, even to the point of purchasing almost identical paintings by the same contemporary artists, such as Vicente Palmarroli Gonzales (1834-1896) and William Adolph Bouguereau (1825-1905). At his Renaissance revival residence in Hyde Park, New York, now the Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site run by the National Park Service (Pl. 76), a group of objects acquired throughout Frederick's life illustrates just such duplication. Among these are pieces of seating furniture from William H. Vanderbilt's music room at 459 Fifth Avenue (Pl. 77), Herter Brothers' trial run before beginning work on 640. Included are: two ebonized cherry side chairs with inlaid marquetry panels representing stylized flowers (Pl. 78); a set of four Turkish-style side or slipper chairs (Pl. 79), possibly the ones partially visible in a surviving photograph of the music room at 459 Fifth Avenue; as well as a matching Turkish-style sofa or couch (Pl. 80).<sup>clxii</sup> The four chairs and sofa could also have been part of a later undocumented

commission from Frederick for either his New York City townhouse or his Hyde Park country estate. Interestingly, these pieces - particularly the ebonized side chairs - strongly relate stylistically to a suite of oak bedroom furniture traditionally believed to be Frederick and his wife, Louise Vanderbilt's first furniture purchases as a couple; comprising of a pair of twin beds, a single night table, side chair (Pl. 81), and chest of drawers with mirror all done in an Anglo-Japanese style, representative of the English-born Aesthetic Movement.<sup>clxiii</sup> Knowing this, it is reasonable to surmise that the furniture for the library at 660 Fifth Avenue was also of Anglo-Japanese influence with ornately tufted Turkish-style slipper chairs and/or armchairs upholstered in a colorful silk brocade similar to the original upholstery scheme of Frederick's suite.

Frederick also purchased a number of Renaissance cabinets either on his buying trips to Europe or through architect Stanford White, who designed his Hyde Park residence. In a letter regarding the furnishings for the Hyde Park house, he instructed White to "... use his own discretion in the selection of furnishings, but to be guided by the list and description of articles required ...."<sup>clxiv</sup> Items of Italian origin were particularly sought after and several items with the Medici family's coat of arms were selected.<sup>clxv</sup> The introduction of genuine antiques is important. Though Stanford White had his own network of Parisian "restorers" at hand, the American Herter firm was often engaged to repair or rework items as needed. The elaborate seventeenth-century coffered ceiling procured by White for Frederick's dining room (Pl. 82) was augmented by Herter Brothers to fit the space's grand dimensions.<sup>clxvi</sup> A seventeenth-century Renaissance cabinet now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art's collection shows similar signs of having been altered, and boasts the addition of a brand that reads "Restored 1884."<sup>clxvii</sup>

Such alterations constituted a small portion of the firm's work, but played a critical role in giving its craftsmen and designers firsthand knowledge of period decorative and construction techniques.

Another significant factor, often overlooked in historians' assessments of 660 Fifth Avenue, is that Herter Brothers was contracted to complete the principal rooms in the house. Evidence from the interviews conducted by Van Pelt suggest that Herter Brothers was also responsible for overseeing the project whereas with other Vanderbilt commissions, they had normally been responsible for interior decoration. The most significant room, the two-story, 50' X 30' Banqueting Hall (Pl. 83) located at the rear of the house was the venue for large dinner parties, concerts, and other major events held by Willie and Alva.<sup>clxviii</sup> Decorated in the style of Henry II, the most imposing feature of the room was a double fireplace at one end of the room (Pl. 84), supported by six caryatids (Pl. 85), that was flanked by a massive carved choir stall bench and balcony (Pl. 86). The area above the bench was designed to hang works of art. Eventually two full length portraits were acquired for this important space: Thomas Gainsborough's 1778 portrait of Mrs. Grace Dalrymple Elliott (1754?–1823) (Pl. 87) purchased from George Henry Hugh Cholmondeley, Fourth Marquess of Cholmondeley, Houghton Hall in either 1884 or 1885 and Sir Joshua Reynolds's 1782 portrait of Captain George K. H. Coussmaker (1759–1801) (Pl. 88) purchased from Charles J. Wertheimer in London probably in 1884.<sup>clxix</sup> These paintings added a layer to the décor serving as mock ancestral portraits, tying the Vanderbilts, if only superficially, to European aristocracy.

The dining room's woodwork was of the highest quality, as recorded by Van Pelt, who noted it was "executed in quartered oak with a natural unstained wax finish...[with

the] quality of the modeling ...akin to the Italian Renaissance than the early French” (Pl. 89).<sup>clxx</sup> Above the high wainscot were rich tapestries brought from Europe.<sup>clxxi</sup> Piercing the band of tapestries were stained glass windows by Hunt’s friend Eugene Oudinot (1827-1889). Hunt had met Oudinot while attending the École des Beaux-Arts.<sup>clxxii</sup> Made in France from what was then dubbed “cathedral” glass - medieval glass salvaged from damaged church windows - the colorful spectacle depicted the theme of the “Field of the Cloth of Gold.”<sup>clxxiii</sup> The combined effect was a ‘new’ Renaissance room as colorful, lively, and richly decorated as the drawing-room at 640 Fifth Avenue, capturing the spirit of the Renaissance *Fête* theme ceiling murals of Pierre-Victor Galland (French, 1822-1892), which William H. Vanderbilt had proudly commissioned.

Of another taste entirely, the tiled Moorish-style Billiard Room (Pl. 90), next to the Banqueting Hall and off the main hall, was completed in an eclectic Persian style. It was designed by L. Marcotte & Co, with the actual work supervised by Herter Brothers’ general manager assistant William Baumgarten (1845-1908).<sup>clxxiv</sup> It is probably Baumgarten’s involvement in overseeing the installation of this particular room that caused some of the confusion and the discrepancy in Van Pelt’s pre-1925 interviews of the workmen who had worked on the house to credit the Herter firm with the work. Initially this room was to be singled out to be drastically different compared to other rooms in the mansion that were all initially envisioned as either French/Italian Renaissance Revival or Gothic. However, construction of the house progressed, plans for this interior soon changed.

The room opposite 660’s main stair was the Salon (Pl. 91). Early plans for this room by an as-of-yet unidentified Parisian firm suggest it was to be boldly decorated in

an archaeologically correct Gothic revival taste with a distinctive, multifaceted fan-vaulted ceiling.<sup>clxxv</sup> The initial plans, however, were shelved after Willie and Alva were informed of the pending Hamilton Palace Collection sale in July 1882. The sale was to be held by Christie, Manson, and Woods by order of William Douglas-Hamilton (1845-1895), the Twelfth Duke of Hamilton, to raise funds for the upkeep of Hamilton Palace (Pl. 92), and would include priceless ceramics, silver, furniture and paintings. William H. Vanderbilt commented on his desire to own such items, exclaiming once:

“There are those who are supposed to know all about these things and their intrinsic values, and of the associations connected with them. Well, I do not know all that, and I am too old to learn. If I should buy these things and take them to New York and tell my friends this belonged to Louis XVI, or to Mme. Pompadour, and should relate all the other things which make them valuable, I should be taking them from a field where they are appreciated to a place where they would not be. Perhaps I should know less about them than anyone else. It would be more affectation for me to buy such things.”<sup>clxxvi</sup>

In truth this was more of a precautionary measure since he was afraid of being duped into purchasing fakes. A number of his contemporaries shared similar concerns.

Even with such suspicions many wealthy Americans still felt the Hamilton Palace sale afforded a rare opportunity to obtain items with indisputable royal provenance. Willie and Alva represented this new generation. They prized such items and could afford their potentially high sale prices. The couple sent instruction to the London dealers Frederick Davis and Samson Wertheimer, to secure lots 1297 and 1298.<sup>clxxvii</sup> Lot 1297 (Pl. 93) was an exceptional *secrétaire à abattant* (fall-front desk) with Japanese black lacquer panels, “...mounted with ormolu by [Pierre] Gouthiere [(1740-1806)], with the monogram of Marie Antoinette in the frieze, intertwined with wreaths of flowers...,” by royal ébéniste Jean-Henri Riesener (1734–1806). Lot 1298 (Pl. 94) was a



matching *commode* (chest of drawers). Both pieces had been made in or around 1783 for the French queen's private apartment at the Château de Saint-Cloud, and had been sold sometime after the French Revolution, passing through several collections until acquired in 1832 by the then Duke of Hamilton. Each lot garnered £9,450, and together they were the first pieces of French royal furniture to be shipped to America.<sup>clxxviii</sup> (The only other piece of furniture in the sale made for Marie Antoinette was lot 203 (Pl. 95), a bureau plat (writing table), also by Riesener, that sold to Wertheimer for 6,000, and which was quickly resold to Baron Ferdinand James Anselm Freiherr von Rothschild (1839-1898).<sup>clxxix</sup>) To display the two pieces of furniture acquired by the Vanderbilts to their full advantage, the yet-to-be-implemented designs for the Gothic room were put aside and a new Regence-style interior was created by the Parisian firm of Jules Allard et Fils (1878-1906), first employed in America by Alva's father-in-law in 1882.<sup>clxxx</sup> Interior decorator Jules Allard (1832-1907) created an eighteenth-century French drawing-room that was both vigorous and glamorous, and where everything shimmered as if made from gold, silver, or crystal. The room featured white painted paneling that combined Regence and Louis XV-style motifs, "...with a circular panel in the ceiling that...contained a painting by [Paul] Baudry [(1828-1886)]."<sup>clxxxi</sup> *The New York Times* account of the room recorded:

"The ceiling, exquisitely painted by Paul Baudry, represents the marriage of Cupid and Psyche, and the furniture is of the bright and gracious style of that age of airy arrogance and perfumed coquetry which preceded the tragedy of the great Revolution."<sup>clxxxii</sup>

The other furnishings of the room included a rare set of circa 1750-1767 Beauvais tapestries after Francois Boucher, depicting *The Rape of Proserpine* (Pl. 96),

*Boreas and Orinthyia*, and *Apollo and Clytie* (Pl. 97), as well as a number of reproduction Louis XV *bérgéres* (closed-end armchairs), some reminiscent of overstuffed Turkish-style chairs, and probably supplied by Herter Brothers. Added to this mix was a series of tiger and lion skins for the floor.<sup>clxxxiii</sup> The end result amounted to one of the most admired salons in New York at the time - one that singularly set a new fashion for recreations of French eighteenth century rooms.<sup>clxxxiv</sup>

In the most fashionable summer resort in America, Newport, Rhode Island, decorating tastes took a slightly more advanced course. As a fortieth birthday present, Willie gave Alva a Newport 'cottage' modeled after the Petit Trianon at Versailles and named it 'Marble House' (Pl. 98).<sup>clxxxv</sup> However, this was not a complete surprise, since Alva had once again been working with Richard Morris Hunt from 1888 up to the house's completion in 1892. For the interiors, Jules Allard was once again retained and his firm repeated much of what they had done within 660 Fifth Avenue, creating a number of rooms reminiscent of those commissioned by France's one time Bourbon monarchs. They also finally got around to creating the Gothic room first conceived by Alva for "little Château de Blois," which would serve as a backdrop for the Gavet Collection of Gothic art recently purchased by Alva on a buying trip with Hunt in 1889 (Pl. 99).<sup>clxxxvi</sup>

However, despite what was evolving into a refined historical authenticity regarding the creation of such rooms, elements of William H. Vanderbilt's drawing-room could still very much be seen. Amidst the only guest bedroom's furnishings was an ormolu mounted clock. The figure crowning the timepiece was none other than a reduced version of Vauthier's Cupid (Pl. 100). Who selected it and why is uncertain.

What is obvious is that Alva and Jules Allard would have been familiar with the strategically placed ivory version in William H. Vanderbilt's drawing-room. This clock demonstrated how items developed for and associated with one style - or for one client - could be carried over into or for another.

The impact of Alva Vanderbilt and 660 Fifth Avenue on American taste would not have been possible if not for the success of the couple's official housewarming, a fancy dress ball held on March 26, 1883 (Pl. 101 & 102).<sup>clxxxvii</sup> Alva carefully planned the event to further insure acceptance from New York's bluebloods. At a time when European royalty was still rare in New York, Alva, with the aid of her childhood friend, Consuelo Yznaga (1858-1909), Lady Mandeville, wife of the impoverished Duke of Manchester, planned for the event of the year.<sup>clxxxviii</sup> Just about anybody in New York society was invited, and twelve hundred invitations were sent out two months in advance, all that is except to Caroline Webster Schermerhorn Astor (1830-1908), the self appointed arbitrator of New York society. The story goes that after some time had passed, Mrs. Astor realized that they had not received an invitation and made discreet inquiries on behalf of her daughter Caroline Schermerhorn Astor (1861-1948), known as Carrie. It was relayed to Mrs. Astor that "Alva admitted with much regret that the Astors had not been invited since Mrs. Astor had never called."<sup>clxxxix</sup> To rectify the situation, Mrs. Astor quickly went around in her carriage and dropped her calling card at 660, formally announcing to the world that the Vanderbilts had "arrived." Of the twelve hundred guests invited to the ball, eight hundred attended with dancing taking place after midnight.<sup>cx</sup> *The New York Times* reported the event and noted Alva's and Willie's costumes:

“Mrs. Vanderbilt's irreproachable taste was seen to perfection in her costume as a Venetian Princess taken from a picture by [Alexandre] Cabanel [(1823-1889) (Pl. 103)]. The underskirt was of white and yellow brocade, shading from the deepest orange to the lightest canary, only the high lights being white. The figures of flowers and leaves were outlined in gold, white, and iridescent beads: light-blue satin train embroidered magnificently in gold and lined with Roman red. Almost the entire length of the train was caught up at one side, forming a large puff. The waist was of blue satin covered with gold embroidery the dress was cut square in the neck, and the flowing sleeves were of transparent gold tissue. She wore a Venetian cap, covered with magnificent jewels, the most noticeable of these being a superb peacock in many colored gems. ... Mr. W.K. Vanderbilt appeared as the Duke de Guise, wearing yellow silk tights, yellow and black trunks, a yellow doublet and a black velvet cloak embroidered in gold, with the order of St. Michael suspended on a black ribbon, and with a white wig, black velvet shoes and buckles.”<sup>cxcxi</sup>

The ball demonstrated the effective use to which a truly great house could be applied. Until 1883, the Vanderbilts had largely been considered social nobodies.<sup>cxcii</sup> Willie had yet to be invited to join any “good” gentlemen’s clubs until after this ball, at which time he was rapidly admitted to the Union, Coaching, Knickerbocker, Racquet and Tennis, Turf and Field, and various yachting clubs. Even Mrs. Astor succumbed and invited Willie and Alva to her annual ball in January of 1884.<sup>cxciii</sup>

Willie and Alva’s, new house marked a new era of luxury and ostentation.<sup>cxciv</sup> By 1885, recognition of the house’s magnificence was solidified further when a survey of the country’s best buildings included 660 Fifth Avenue as the only residence in the top ten. Ranked number three, it was only surpassed by the United States Capital, number two, and H. H. Richardson’s Boston Trinity Church, voted number one.<sup>cxcv</sup> Charles F. McKim, of McKim, Mead & White, later in life remarked that he enjoyed strolling past the house in the evenings “just for refreshment.”<sup>cxcvi</sup> While there had been no question of the Vanderbilts’ wealth before construction, there was no question of their taste and social place afterwards. New York society had been made to realize that architecture

could promote individuals, helping establishing them in society. After the success of the “little Château de Blois,” a new wave of rivalries would be settled through the creation of several more drawing-rooms and ballrooms modeled after Alva’s French Salon.<sup>cxcvii</sup>

The continuation of the interpretation of the Venetian and Florentine forms first evident in William H. Vanderbilt’s Renaissance revival drawing-room, and repeated throughout Willie and Alva Vanderbilt’s mansion across the street, established a shift in American domestic interior design. Without William H. Vanderbilt’s support and network of contractors and craftsman, including Herter Brothers and Jules Allard, what Hunt and Alva envisioned would not have materialized. Admittedly elitist, this decorating trend illustrated the beginning of wealthy Americans’ adapting European Renaissance style for the express purpose of visually representing their desired persona as American royalty. Through Alva’s efforts, French “period rooms” would add to a developing American design lexicon. Visual metaphors representative of the Bourbon court aided in further identifying American pedigree, and thus social acceptance. Newspaper reports of Gilded Age galas and fancy dress parties, before the days of Hollywood, perpetuated this image of American royalty to the world. Be it for a modern day reincarnation of a Medici Prince or French Queen, architecture had become a valuable tool in promoting the ambitions and securing the social standing of newly rich Americans.

## **A Return to the Past & Further Publication: The Morgan Drawing-room**

Beyond influencing members of his own family, William H. Vanderbilt's drawing-room at 640 Fifth Avenue also influenced friends and business partners. Of these John Pierpont Morgan (1837-1913) (Pl. 104) and his second wife, Frances Louisa Tracy ("Fanny"; 1842-1924) (Pl. 105), were among the most enamored spectators who attended the Vanderbilt's January 24, 1882 house warming.<sup>cxviii</sup> The impact the Vanderbilt drawing-room had on the Morgans' decorating decisions would ultimately validate William H. Vanderbilt as a taste-maker, elevating his social status, and further perpetuating such socially driven decorating trends.

Like the Vanderbilt family, the Morgan family had a long history in America dating back to the Colonial period and the English-born Miles Morgan who emigrated to the Connecticut River Valley in 1636.<sup>cxci</sup> Like William H. Vanderbilt, J. Pierpont Morgan came from an old and prosperous family, but unlike his contemporary, the latter's family had secured a social respectability and acceptance by the time of his birth. J. Pierpont Morgan's grandfather, Joseph Morgan (?-1847?) (Pl. 106), was the first in the family to improve the family's social position by abandoning farming and moving into the mercantile trade, and specifically shipping and insurance endeavors.<sup>cc</sup> Joseph's son and J. Pierpont Morgan's father, Junius Spencer Morgan (1813-1890) (Pl. 107), followed his father's example, joining the mercantile firm of James M. Beebe & Company and later moving to London to become a partner in George Peabody & Company, a banking firm that specialized in investing European capital in America's developing industries.<sup>cci</sup> Junius was successful enough that he was able to send Pierpont to a Swiss boarding school and then to Germany's celebrated University of

Gottingen.<sup>ccii</sup> When J. Pierpont Morgan returned to London in 1857 he was fluent in French and German, and well versed in European culture, having received a degree in art history while at university.<sup>cciii</sup> After a brief banking apprenticeship in New York, Pierpont formed a partnership with his father who dealt with clients in London while he, himself, remained in New York, founding J. Pierpont Morgan & Company with his cousin, James Junius Goodwin (1835-1915). This company was successful in attracting European investors for America's developing industries, attaining a reputation as a reliable and trustworthy firm in the process.<sup>cciv</sup> In the period between 1850 and 1890, J. Pierpont Morgan focused on investing his personal money and that of his clients' primarily in the ever expanding American railroads.<sup>ccv</sup>

J. Pierpont Morgan's reputation as one of America's leading industrialists was derived from the vast influence he wheeled over the American financial markets at large, demonstrated in 1907 when he prevented a national financial panic by organizing other financiers to loan essential funds to distressed markets.<sup>ccvi</sup> To enhance his image as an educated gentleman, he amassed an art collection that he estimated to be worth \$50,000,000 a year before his death, while his financial investments were valued at \$58,149,024.<sup>ccvii</sup> This disproportionate balance between actual wealth and art reinforced the significance placed on the personas cultivated by such individuals. Though J. Pierpont Morgan was not the wealthiest industrialist, he had an impressive and substantial fortune at his disposal which he spent on his numerous residences. Among the places he called "home" were a brownstone at 219 Madison Avenue in New York; a 700 acre country estate on the Hudson River at Highland Falls, called "Cragston;" a rustic camp in the Adirondacks, called "Camp Uncas"; a modest Newport retreat; an

apartment on Jekyll Island in Georgia; a 300-foot long yacht, called “Corsair;” a centrally located London townhouse facing Hyde Park- 13 Prince Gate; and a Regency villa called “Dover House,” which had extensive gardens and pleasure grounds located just outside London near the Thames in Putney Park Lane, Roehampton.<sup>ccviii</sup> The latter two houses replicated the models of English aristocrats, while the remaining inventory replicated that of the American millionaire.

The majority of Pierpont’s celebrated art collection, which was largely assembled in Europe, remained in his London townhouse, and was not shipped to the United States until late in his life, avoiding adherence to the 1897 U.S. Government Revenue Act that imposed a hefty “twenty-percent tariff on imported works of art.”<sup>ccix</sup> However, this did not deter J. Pierpont Morgan from hanging paintings in his New York brownstone. The same art critic who wrote *Mr. Vanderbilt’s House and Collections*, Earl Shinn (1838-1886), included J. Pierpont Morgan's collection in his 1879-1882 publication, *Art Treasures of America*, an attempted comprehensive inventory and critical review of “...the choicest works of art in public and private collections in North America.”<sup>ccx</sup> Ranked among the minor collections by Shinn, J. Pierpont Morgan’s collection consisted of a small number - approximately 35 - paintings by mostly French artists such as Narcisse Diaz de la Peña (1807-1876), but there were other works by such American artists as Frederic E. Church (1826-1900).<sup>ccxi</sup> Though the collection was modest compared to others included in Shinn’s publication, the significance of the paintings were great.<sup>ccxii</sup>

J. Pierpont Morgan’s good eye and lifelong appreciation and pursuit of art formed a reputation that was more myth than fact, as the millionaire never became a serious



scholar or personally examined his fine art holdings to any great degree.<sup>ccxiii</sup> Indeed, the strength of what would become known as the “Morgan Collection” would lie more with the decorative arts than with paintings or sculpture.<sup>ccxiv</sup> In 1898, following Alva Vanderbilt’s precedent of including French-style “period” rooms within American mansions, Morgan commissioned Duveen Brothers (1879?-1964), the notable London- and Paris- based art dealers, to furnish a drawing-room within his Prince Gate residence (Pl. 108) in the Louis XVI style, with tables, chairs, *chenets* (andirons), and actual eighteenth century Sèvres porcelains. Coveting fine art objects with royal provenances, in 1899 he purchased a commode and *secrétaire à abattant* (fall-front desk) en suite made in 1790 for Queen Marie-Antoinette by Jean-Henri Riesener (1734-1806), not unlike the pieces acquired by Alva Vanderbilt from the 1882 Hamilton Palace Sale.<sup>ccxv</sup> In just over twenty years, between 1885 and 1907, J. Pierpont Morgan spent approximately \$60,000,000 on art, buying the majority of his collection en bloc, consolidating extant ‘collections’ to form one massive collection.<sup>ccxvi</sup> At the time of his 1913 death, his collection was reported by the *New York Times* to be considered “the finest private collection” in existence by many experts.<sup>ccxvii</sup> Five years earlier, the London *Times* reported on Pierpont’s rare books and manuscript collection, assessing American collectors of the time, noting that: “One out of ten has taste; one out of a hundred has genius. Mr. Frick, Mr. Altman, Mr. Widener in America, and the late Rodolphe Kann in Paris, come under the former category; but the man of genius is Mr. Pierpont Morgan.”<sup>ccxviii</sup>

Despite the overwhelming approval and praise Pierpont’s eccentric taste received from critics, his second wife, Fanny, disapproved of this extravagance.<sup>ccxix</sup> Not

sharing his interest in art she once said that "...he would buy anything from a pyramid to Mary Magdalene's tooth."<sup>CCXX</sup> Ironically, he did eventually acquire a late-fifteenth-century reliquary that allegedly contained one of Magdalene's molars.<sup>CCXXI</sup> However, regardless of what Fanny stated publicly, based on her involvement in the remodeling and redecoration of their New York brownstone, her own taste proved not to be too dissimilar or any less eccentric than her husband's.

The Morgans' New York City residence to some degree was an oddity, or at least its location was. While the Morgans were one of the few New York families with the means to move to the more fashionable areas in the north, they opted to move four blocks south of their initial residence at Six East Fortieth Street. In 1880 they purchased an out of fashion mid-1850's brownstone located on the Northeast corner of Thirty-sixth Street and Madison Avenue for \$215,000 (PI. 109).<sup>CCXXII</sup> Almost immediately the Morgans engaged Herter Brothers to remodel and redecorate the house.<sup>CCXXIII</sup> This is not surprising since, like William H. Vanderbilt, J. Pierpont Morgan had been among Herter Brothers' early clients, establishing a close working relationship with the firm and relying on them for almost every household need.<sup>CCXXIV</sup>

For the newly acquired house, Christian Herter, despite his previous announcement to the press that William H. Vanderbilt's house at 640 Fifth Avenue would be his last before retirement, took charge of the Morgan commission. He oversaw the project between 1880 and 1882.<sup>CCXXV</sup> Fanny appears to have been the instigator in hiring Herter Brothers. She noted in her diary several visits with Christian Herter, discussing details from November 8, 1881 when she had a "long talk with Mr. Herter in the morning," until the house was completed in 1882.<sup>CCXXVI</sup> Fanny also recorded visiting

William H. Vanderbilt's recently completed house on January 24, 1882, noting the interiors were "superb."<sup>ccxxvii</sup> Not surprisingly, many of the finishing touches of the Morgan residence would bare a striking resemblance to Vanderbilt's, particularly those of the drawing-room.<sup>ccxxviii</sup> It should be noted that more than half of the project's two year span was devoted to structural renovations to the house, which were not completed until the latter part of 1881, delaying the interior decoration.<sup>ccxxix</sup> The principal change made to the house was the repositioning of the main entrance from Madison Avenue to East Thirty-sixth Street, redefining the original entrance as a large bay window off the drawing-room.<sup>ccxxx</sup>

The interior's decoration and furnishing seems to have moved more swiftly and with haste, with the family moving in during the summer of 1882.<sup>ccxxxi</sup> Fanny recorded on October 31, 1882 that a "photographer came to take views of the rooms," presumably for D. Appleton and Company's forthcoming 1883-84 publication, *Artistic Houses*, with text probably by George William Sheldon (1843-1914).<sup>ccxxxii</sup> It has been suggested that the interiors were rushed to completion in order for them to be included in this important limited-edition publication.<sup>ccxxxiii</sup> This is more than likely since it would suggest that the Morgans - like William H. Vanderbilt through *Mr. Vanderbilt's House and Collections* - were interested and proactive in reinforcing their social position through promoting their home, and thus establishing themselves as representative of definitive taste.<sup>ccxxxiv</sup>

Within *Artistic Houses*, the Morgan interior was discussed in the fullest detail. The "spacious and charming drawing-room (Pl. 110)," was described as "Stretching the entire length of the Madison Avenue side of the building, and approached on the main level."<sup>ccxxxv</sup> Inspired by the ruins of Pompeii, the style of the room was deemed

“Pompeiiian,” as the book’s author felt “a breath from the Greco-Roman epoch of Italia seem[s] to have left its faint impress on the walls, or rather its faint fragrance in the atmosphere.”<sup>ccxxxvi</sup> Not directly copied from any particular building, the room was not considered a “slavish copy,” but a modern interior that was reminiscent of the grandeur of ancient Rome.<sup>ccxxxvii</sup> Author Shelton’s description continued:

“...the aroma of perfect taste which prevails alike in the modest wood-work painted in ivory color, sprinkled with gold, and spangled with decorations; in the ceiling, which curves down to the frieze of wood, and is ornamented with a net-work of ropes in relief, and a suggestion (not an imitation) of light-colored mosaic; in the frieze itself, with its free-running ornament of Pompeiiian red, and with parts of its carving touched up with gold; in the walls, divided by pilasters whose color corresponds with the frieze, and upholstered in Japanese stuffs worked in silk and gilt thread, and resplendent with appliqué work of Persian embroidery; in the chairs, covered with Japanese gold-thread embroidered on a black ground; in the divans and cushions of cherry plush and old Persian embroidery; in the glass cabinets of ivory-colored wood-work to match the furniture, filled with rare and costly bric-a-brac.”<sup>ccxxxviii</sup>

The melding of Pompeian, Japanese, and Persian design vocabularies resulted in a “restrained elegance” for the Morgan drawing-room, something the Herter firm had perfected through the decoration of William H. Vanderbilt’s drawing-room.<sup>ccxxxix</sup>

Ironically, despite Shelton not considering the Morgan drawing-room a “slavish copy,” many of the distinctive features were modeled after elements found in the Vanderbilt interior. Herter derived the elaborate *Pompeiiian* pilasters and ivory colored paneling from the carved window lintels and door frames executed by Herter Brothers for the Vanderbilt drawing-room (Pl. 12).<sup>ccxli</sup> A variation of the African ‘onyx’ pillar-form pedestals (Pl. 40) that supported gold cages in the Vanderbilt drawing-room were also reincarnated; here executed in wood highlighted with ivory and *Pompeiiian* red paint, and incorporated into the woodwork around the room’s bay window.<sup>ccxlii</sup> Other elements

were more directly copied including the most recognizable piece of furniture Herter Brothers created for the Vanderbilt drawing-room, the gilt and mother-of-pearl inlaid side chairs with deer-like hooved feet and flared backs derived from Chinese architecture (Pl. 37).<sup>ccxlii</sup> Though the Morgan examples were simpler, lacking mother-of-pearl inlays and elaborate embroidered Chinese silk upholstery, they still maintained a touch of exoticism through the striking contrast of the solid black velvet upholstery against the burnished gilt frames (Pl. 111).<sup>ccxliii</sup>

The borrowing of elements from William H. Vanderbilt's drawing-room was not unusual. In many instances, Herter Brothers supplied various clients with furniture that shared forms, ornamentation, or other distinctive features. Their craftsmen are known to have reused templates. But each client's commission was inevitably individualized, allowing pieces to be seen as unique.<sup>ccxliv</sup> The specific duplication of some of William H. Vanderbilt's drawing-room furniture was no doubt a deliberate choice, as Fanny noted in her diary how much she liked what she had seen when she visited the Vanderbilt house.<sup>ccxlv</sup> Beyond the decoration, the function of the Morgan drawing-room mirrored that of the Vanderbilts - a space devoted not only to displaying the variety of accumulated valuable objet d'art, but also to further social advancement or in the Morgans' case, to solidify such. Herter Brothers also incorporated works by the F. Barbedienne Foundry (1838-1952), who had been responsible for a number of unique tables and bronze display cabinets - including the Persian inspired *cloisonné* enamel cabinet - within the Vanderbilt drawing-room. However, for the Morgan commission, copies of antique and Renaissance sculptures by Barbedienne were utilized throughout all of the public rooms.<sup>ccxlviccxlvii</sup>

To display the Morgans' valuable bric-a-brac the majority of the room's cabinetry, supplied by Herter Brothers, consisted of a number of display cases and stands (Pl. 112). These were probably similar to those made for Mary Jane Morgan, one of New York's leading collectors in the 1880's and the widow of Charles Morgan (1795-1878), possibly a distant cousin of J. Pierpont Morgan.<sup>ccxlviii</sup> After the 1878 death of her husband, Mrs. Morgan embarked on a massive shopping spree, amassing one of the largest holdings of art in New York. She was not a great connoisseur, but like J. Pierpont Morgan she actively purchased collections en bloc, such as one of Chinese snuff bottles – reputed to be the “finest collection in the world” - assembled by Count de Semalle, a former member of the French legation to Peking.<sup>ccxlix</sup> Listed in the later auction catalogue published following her 1886 death were several “bric-a-brac case[s]...with gold gilt bronze mountings, [with] a movable shelf,” followed by matching tables made to support such cases, all custom ordered from “Messrs. Herter,” and all made specifically to display small works in her collection.<sup>cccl</sup> Lot 1345, a 33 inch ivory version of Augustin Moreau-Vauthier's (1831-1893) sculpture of *Fortuna* (Pl. 113) was “sold with [a] hexagonal shaped beveled glass case, with silver mounting, made to order by Tiffany & Co.”<sup>cccli</sup> This entry gives insight to the extent and lavish attention given to such vitrines. Included in the sale of her art collection were also copies of *Artistic Houses*, No. 338 of the 500 published copies, and *Art Treasures of America*, further verifying the importance and influence of these publications.<sup>ccclii</sup>

J. Pierpont Morgan was involved with and both pleased and proud of the results of his house's transformation. In particular he prized a set of six octagonal panels that were incorporated into the coffered ceiling of his library (Pl. 114), which he proudly

boasted were painted by Christian Herter "...with his own hands."<sup>ccliii</sup> He was also the instigator behind the installation of electric lights, making his house possibly the first in New York to successfully be equipped with the new innovation.<sup>ccliv</sup> Having been one of the first to invest in the Edison Electrical Illuminating Company in 1878, Pierpont secured Thomas Edison, as William H. Vanderbilt had, to oversee the installation.<sup>cclv</sup> Unlike the Vanderbilts' attempt thwarted by Mrs. Vanderbilt's concern for safety, Fanny Morgan took an interest and noted in her diary a visit to the house "...to see the light tried again."<sup>cclvi</sup> The installation of the electrical system was not without faults and the lights were prone to short-circuiting and on one occasion, not unlike the Vanderbilts' experience, hot wires in the library scorched J. Pierpont Morgan's desk and burned a carpet.<sup>cclvii</sup> Despite these setbacks, J. Pierpont Morgan was so satisfied with the result that he held a reception for about four hundred guests to come and marvel "at the convenience and simplicity of the lighting system."<sup>cclviii</sup>

Through the publication of *Artistic Houses* in 1883-1884, and with a slew of social events held by the Morgans, their residence became one of the most praised houses in America - a prime example of "good taste." Through comparison, there is little doubt the success of the Morgan drawing-room would not have been possible without the earlier creation of William H. Vanderbilt's drawing-room. By fashioning their own drawing-room after the Vanderbilt drawing-room, the socially secure Morgans inadvertently elevated William H. Vanderbilt's social standing by confirming him as a gentleman of 'taste,' fulfilling his initial goal. More important, the diffusion of interior design through secondary sources published at the time, such as *Mr. Vanderbilt's House and Collection*

and *Artistic Houses* guaranteed such socially driven decorating trends would spread and extend to other cities in America, including Boston and Baltimore.



## The Conspicuous Southern Rebels: The Garretts' Social Rise

Many of the new publications featuring illustrations of interiors from the residences of America's *nouveau riche* overwhelmingly focused on houses in New York City, as was the case with the 1883-4 publication *Artistic Houses*. Other cities were represented, such as Boston and Philadelphia. However, no residence in America's 'Monument City,' Baltimore, was included though that city certainly could easily have provided numerous examples of intentional displays of wealth as a means of attaining and/or securing social position. While this city was absent from *Artistic Houses*, Baltimore's elite all the same subscribed to the limited edition four volume publication.<sup>cclix</sup> Those in Baltimore who had copies of the series – as well as other like publications – were greatly inspired by what they saw. In other instances, Baltimoreans familiar for one reason or another with New York and other larger American metropolises were able to draw from their own experiences and network of friends up north.

Just as no one could rival the social ambition or wealth of the Vanderbilt family in New York, few in Maryland could rival the wealth and social dominance achieved by members of Baltimore's Garrett family, and in particular Thomas Harrison Garrett (1849-1888) (Pl. 115) and his older brother, Robert Garrett (1847-1896) (Pl. 117), and their respective spouses, Alice Whitridge Garrett (1851-1920) (Pl. 116), and Mary Frick Garrett (1851-1936) (Pl.118). The founder of the Garrett fortune was an Irish immigrant, Robert Garrett (1783-1857) (Pl. 119).<sup>cclix</sup> After moving to Baltimore in 1801 and dabbling in the lucrative commodities trade, he established his own shipping firm, Robert Garrett & Company (later renamed Robert Garrett & Sons), in 1819.<sup>cclxi</sup> In 1840 his two

surviving sons, Henry Stouffer Garrett (1818-1867) and John Work Garrett (1820-1884) (Pl. 120), joined their father's firm. While Henry oversaw the family interests in Baltimore, his brother broadened the firm's interests to include the western trade. This culminated in the aggressive development of one of the earliest American railroads, the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, which had been chartered in 1827. In 1858, John, at the age of 38, became President of the railroad.<sup>cclxii</sup> Between Robert Garrett & Sons and the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, John amassed an impressive fortune, which he used to build a sizable art collection and for philanthropic endeavors. The latter included the donation of animals to the city's zoo as well as a copy of Lorenzo Ghiberti's Gates of Paradise by the Barbedienne Foundry for the newly formed Peabody Institute. John Garrett was also an active and generous member of the original Board of Trustees for The Johns Hopkins University, personally selected by his friend and the school's namesake, Johns Hopkins (1795-1873).<sup>cclxiii</sup> When John Work Garrett died in 1884, he left almost \$17,000,000 dollars for division among his four children.<sup>cclxiv</sup>

In 1878, John Work Garrett acquired through Robert Garrett & Sons a country estate just outside Baltimore, called "Evergreen" (Pl. 121), for his son, Thomas Harrison Garrett, and his family.<sup>cclxv</sup> Thomas, often referred to as T. Harrison, joined the family firm in 1867, just prior to graduating from Princeton University.<sup>cclxvi</sup> It was while attending Princeton that he developed his passion for collecting. His interests were varied, ranging from Chinese porcelains to Japanese lacquer wares, from Meissen figural groups to prints, autographs, rare books, and western coinage.<sup>cclxvii</sup> T. Harrison eventually employed a full-time librarian to help catalogue his ever expanding library, said to be the then largest private holding in the State of Maryland.<sup>cclxviii</sup> Among the

volumes he acquired were reference materials for his collecting interests that included publications on prominent collections in Europe and America, as well as copies of *Art Treasures of America, Mr. Vanderbilt's House and Collections*, and *Artistic Houses*.<sup>cclxix</sup>

After the death of his father in 1884, T. Harrison began renovating and adapting Evergreen to accommodate his growing collections.<sup>cclxx</sup>

In 1885, Garrett purchased en bloc the largest collection of prints in America. Assembled by businessman and banker James Lawrence Claghorn (1817-1884), the collection consisted of nearly 28,000 prints, over two-hundred of which were attributed to Rembrandt.<sup>cclxxi</sup> With the majority of the prints to be stored at Evergreen, among his renovation goals was to erect a gallery to equal, if not surpass, Claghorn's print gallery within his Philadelphia residence at 222 North Nineteenth Street, which T. Harrison was familiar with through the inclusion of a photograph and description in volume one of *Artistic Houses* (Pl. 122).<sup>cclxxii</sup> T. Harrison's obtained estimates from local carpenters in Baltimore.<sup>cclxxiii</sup> However, this gallery was never built. Instead, T. Harrison engaged P. Hanson Hiss & Co. (1864-?), Baltimore's most prestigious decorating firm, to renovate the major first floor rooms between 1884 and 1885.<sup>cclxxiv</sup> Combining aspects of both William H. Vanderbilt's drawing-room (Pl. 12) and Alva Vanderbilt's Francophile interiors (Pl. 91), Garrett soon attained a mixture of Renaissance and Bourbon-court-inspired rooms that rivaled any in New York and which visually affirmed T. Harrison's desire to be seen as one of America's leading collectors and patrons of the arts. This was not a surprising scenario since T. Harrison and his wife both had diverse tastes, judging by their shared library holdings that included many of the auction catalogues to the same sales the Vanderbilts had attended, including a copy of the 1882 Hamilton Palace sale.

The Garretts' taste was no doubt regionally seen as bold, since Baltimoreans of the time were rightfully perceived as conservative, adhering to their own established local social code that frowned upon the lavish spending and excessive entertaining associated with the likes of New York and Newport. Such strictness was common in the postbellum South, and in Baltimore, it probably represented the fact that many of Maryland's most prominent families had been Southern sympathizers during the Civil War, with fortunes tied to agriculture. Never the less, inspired by what he had seen in New York and in publications, such as *Artistic Houses*, T. Harrison hired Baltimore's leading architect, Charles L. Carson (1847-1891), to oversee Evergreen's major renovations.<sup>cclxxv</sup>

In 1884, instead of constructing the previously noted art gallery, T. Harrison and his wife, Alice, opted to build a new dining room (Pl. 123) on the east side of the rear of the house, decorated in the Renaissance revival style. Fitted with oak wainscot, an ornate coffered ceiling, and built-in carved oak sideboards, the room also featured a conservatory at one end (Pl. 124).<sup>cclxxvi</sup> Alice took particular interest in furnishing this room, corresponding with Herter Brothers, whose now familiar work was featured in *Artistic Houses*, to obtain suitable pieces of furniture. Herter Brothers recommended and eventually supplied an elaborately carved set of furniture consisting of an undetermined number of side chairs, two armchairs, and an elaborately carved extension table, similar in form and decoration to the gilded center table the firm supplied for William H. Vanderbilt's drawing-room.<sup>cclxxvii</sup>

At the same time, the Garretts appear to have ordered additional furniture from Herter Brothers, as an early photograph of their drawing-room (Pl. 125) documents

several identifiable Herter furniture forms. The most notable of these are a sofa and pair of armchairs that relate to a pair of armchairs supplied to J. P. Morgan for his drawing-room at 219 Madison Avenue, New York (Pl. 110). While this form (Pl. 126, 127) was also duplicated for Oliver Ames' copy of the Morgan's drawing-room, the Garretts' version is the only known example to have been upholstered not in velvet, but in a Japanese-inspired silk damask with a pattern of water lilies and dragonflies, designed by Christian Herter (1839-1883) (Pl. 128). However, it should be noted that this same fabric was utilized elsewhere in the Morgan and Ames interiors, just not in the same context. Indeed, it is interesting to note Herter Brothers' use of this fabric after Christian Herter's 1883 death. This is one of the last interiors where this exclusive fabric is known to have been used, indicating Herter Brothers was using existing stock for the Garretts. Perhaps its selection was client derived, with the choice being born of T. Harrison Garrett's familiarity with the Morgan New York residence through business dealings.<sup>cclxxviii</sup> Since the Morgans' drawing-room was considered the most tasteful parlor in *Artistic Houses*, a decision to duplicate some of the furniture and finishes would surely have been intentional.

Also present in the previously cited photograph of the Garretts' drawing-room (Pl. 125) are several pieces of Louis XVI-style furniture. Probably selected by Alice, an avid Francophile, these pieces included several tulipwood veneered and ormolu mounted side tables, an ovoid cylindrical vitrine, a vitrine table, and a *bonheur-du-jour* (lady's writing desk with cabinet on top) (Pl. 129-133). While this furniture reflected Alva Vanderbilt's acquisitions from the 1882 Hamilton Palace sale (Pl. 93 & 94), their selection also related to the French-born fashion for the taste of the romanticized

Bourbon court of the eighteenth century, and, idealization of Marie Antoinette as a 'martyr' of the 1789 French Revolution. After the Prussian invasion of 1870, the people of France had quickly turned to such idealization of their past to aid in accepting their recent defeat. This culminated in the 1878 Paris Exposition where, in addition to the head of the Statue of Liberty by Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi (1834-1904), an abundance of reproductions and adaptations of eighteenth century furniture forms and other decorative arts were exhibited.<sup>cclxxix</sup> The presence of such furniture at Evergreen demonstrated the Garretts' awareness of such trends.

Unifying and connecting the first floor, the main hallway (Pl. 134) underwent the most extensive structural alterations. P. Hanson Hiss & Co. installed polished oak wainscot, "...treated in an antique greenish brown [to] give the grain of the wood a particularly rich effect..." and incorporated a 17<sup>th</sup> century Flemish tapestry (backed by cedar paneling to discourage moths), as well as a carved oak bench.<sup>cclxxx</sup> To counter balance the bench and tapestry, P. Hanson Hiss & Co. installed an impressive three-tiered mantel of "Antique Green Oak" along the opposing wall.<sup>cclxxxi</sup> Reflective of Herter Brother's scheme for J. P. Morgan's Pompeiian drawing-room (Pl. 110), where carved columns supported a stained glass lattice patterned screen, P. Hanson Hiss & Co. recommended fitting out the hall with "...polished Oak," and:

"...that the Arch at the foot of staircase be filled in with carved lattice work, which will be supported by two pilasters, and a center Column, which will take the place of the present newel [post] - Also that the front Hall be divided from the back Hall by a carved and latticed screen supported by two pilasters and side Columns."<sup>cclxxxii</sup>

Hiss also recommended painting the ceiling and upper portions of the walls with a complex treatment similar to that applied by Herter Brothers in the Morgan's drawing-

room. In a letter to T. Harrison, the firm suggested that the moldings should be a “...golden olive [with] the design to be worked out in Antique blue and gold bronzier.”<sup>cclxxxiii</sup> In the same letter, they further proposed that “the side walls of 1<sup>st</sup> [floor] Hall and staircase up to 2<sup>nd</sup> [floor] Hall... be treated with an old red ground on which a bold pattern will be worked out in colors and metals, All other Walls and Ceilings to harmonize with this treatment.”<sup>cclxxxiv</sup> The explicit use of Europe’s cultural lineage to create a visual parallel between the occupants of the house, namely T. Harrison Garrett, and the art patronage of Cosimo de’Medici (1389 -1464), was continued by using Medici insignia, clusters of balls and feathers (Pl.135-138), in the Italian marble mosaic floor installed by Herter Brothers. With the Medici reference clearly defined, the link between the Renaissance art patron and T. Harrison’s own collecting endeavors was affirmed.

To fill this imposing space, several potted palms in Minton jardinières were positioned along the room’s perimeter, and a large Japanese bronze censer (Pl. 139) assigned as a visual focal point. At one end of the hall, near the fireplace, a group of chairs, including a Liberty & Co. ‘Thebes’ chair (Pl. 140), were placed to denote the gathering function of the space. A reproduction of an eighteenth-century French *secrétaire à abattant* (fall-front desk) similar to those offered at the 1882 Hamilton Palace sale which the Garretts attended, was placed by the entrance to what had been the ‘Reception Room,’ and which was newly recognized as the ‘Print Room’ (Pl. 141).

While T. Harrison relied heavily on published references to decorate his home in what was then praised by critics in New York as being in ‘good taste,’ his older brother, Robert Garrett, and his wife, Mary Frick Garrett modeled their Baltimore townhouse after what they personally saw in New York, securing their own positions in Baltimore

society. Robert Garrett (Pl. 117), as the eldest son of John Work Garrett, was encouraged by his father to take his place in the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, similar to how Junius Spencer Morgan (1813-1890) supported his son John Pierpont Morgan (1837-1913). In 1872 at the age of twenty-five, Robert married Mary Sloan Frick (Pl. 118).<sup>cclxxxv</sup> Their relationship and marriage, like that of T. Harrison Garrett and Alice Whitridge Garrett, mirrored that of William Kissam Vanderbilt (1849-1920) and Alva Erskine Smith (1853-1933); with the groom bringing money and the bride bringing a coveted family pedigree to the match. In fact Mary Frick Garrett descended from a number of Maryland's most illustrious families, and was a direct descendant of Judge William Frick (1790-1855) and Revolutionary War hero Major John Swan (1750-1821) (Pl. 142).<sup>cclxxxvi</sup> Upon their 1872 marriage, John Work Garrett purchased No. 11 West Mt. Vernon Place as a wedding present. The house, originally built for Samuel K. George, was a typical Baltimore brick townhouse, located in one of the most fashionable neighborhoods of the city, Mt. Vernon Place, and within eyesight of Robert's father's own house at 101 West Monument Street (Pl. 143).<sup>cclxxxvii</sup>

After John Work Garrett's 1884 death, and following his brother's lead, Robert set out to turn his own house into one of the most fashionable residences in the city. Unlike T. Harrison, who obviously greatly adhered to *Mr. Vanderbilt's House and Collections* and *Artistic Houses*, Robert and Mary Frick Garrett most likely relied on their network of friends for insights on fashionable and reliable designers and craftsman in New York, as they had befriended many members of the Vanderbilt and Morgan families while summering in Newport, Rhode Island as early as 1882.<sup>cclxxxviii</sup> In fact, Robert was present when William H. Vanderbilt collapsed and died in his New York



library at 640 Fifth Avenue, while renovations of No. 11 West Mt. Vernon Place in Baltimore were underway.<sup>ccxxxix</sup> To accomplish what Mary Frick Garrett envisioned, the couple purchased No. 9 West Mt. Vernon Place, the townhouse next door to their existing house, and enlisted the aid of one of America's leading architectural firms at the time, the New York-based McKim, Mead & White to combine the two structures (Pl. 144).<sup>ccxc</sup> A new 'brownstone' façade was proposed, and the interiors were redesigned to afford larger rooms more in keeping with the newly constructed mansions of New York City. These plans, however, provoked controversy among conservative Baltimoreans as the new house's proposed scale and facade broke with the harmony of the surrounding older Greek revival, Italianate, and Gothic revival houses.<sup>ccxci</sup> Henry Pratt Janes (dates unknown), the Garretts' next door neighbor at No. 13 West Mt. Vernon Place, led the battle, filing suit against the new design, assessing the proposed new portico entrance violated Baltimore's set-back ordinances. Eventually Robert's influence and money won out, and construction went ahead as planned.<sup>ccxcii</sup>

As was the case with William Kissam Vanderbilt, Robert would eventually become too preoccupied with business and later suffer from a nervous breakdown, prior to his house's 1887 completion. This would prevent him from overseeing the remodeling, beyond paying the bills. Instead, architect Stanford White (1853-1906) oversaw the project from New York, while Mary Frick Garrett, with the aid of Robert's chief secretary at Robert Garrett & Sons, Amzi Crane (1850-1907?), took the lead role in coordinating the renovation, just as Alva Vanderbilt had done for the "little Château de Blois" a few years before. A perfectionist at heart, Mrs. Garrett had several of the home's finishes reworked to meet with her exacting specifications.<sup>ccxciii</sup> Once again,

members of the Garrett family employed the firms of P. Hanson Hiss & Co. and Herter Brothers to carry out the interiors. Herter Brothers supplied a number of furnishings for the house, including colorful antique tapestries and richly embroidered textiles.<sup>ccxciv</sup> Oddly enough, Mary Garrett took little interest in the family's private rooms on the second floor, even allocating the selection of the white painted furniture for her own bedroom (Pl. 145) that would be supplied by the prestigious Boston firm of A. H. Davenport (1875-1910) to the architect, White.<sup>ccxcv</sup> Instead, she preferred to focus on the decoration of the first-floor public spaces, particularly the entrance hall, salon, ballroom, and conservatory.

The large two-story entrance hall (Pl. 146), modeled upon great baronial halls found in Europe, had high-relief carved wainscot and paneled ceiling made by Herter Brothers that were only visually interrupted by a massive fireplace supplied by another New York firm, that of W. H. Jackson (dates unknown).<sup>ccxcvi</sup> Herter Brothers was also responsible for creating the large carved oak spiral staircase, modeled after the stone staircase at Château de Blois (Pl. 147), the same building referenced by Richard Morris Hunt and Alva Vanderbilt for 660 Fifth Avenue in New York, as well as a narrow balcony, with an elaborately carved Renaissance balustrade connecting three sides of the room. On the upper level of the walls hung several 16<sup>th</sup> century Brussels tapestries depicting the story of Scipio Africanus (Pl. 148).<sup>ccxcvii</sup> Hiding amongst the paneling and tapestries was a small decorative wooden screen fashioned after a Moroccan *mashrabiya* (a wooden screen made of turned spools intended to allow for privacy, light, and ventilation) that afforded Mary Garrett uninterrupted – and undetected – inspection of her guests. Serving as both a figurative and literal crown to the imposing composition

was a large glass dome supplied by Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848-1933), which illuminated the staircase (Pl. 149).

While the majority of the windows in the house were made of “French + Venetian Antique” leaded glass supplied by John Stack & Sons of Baltimore, lighting the main hall were a number of stained glass windows supplied by Tiffany Glass & Decorating Co. (1892-1902).<sup>ccxcviii</sup> The principal window was placed above the vestibule entrance. Entitled “The Standard Bearers,” the still extant window executed in rich jewel like colors, depicts three figures in Renaissance costume, each holding a flag bellowing in the wind (Pl. 150).<sup>ccxcix</sup> This single window seems to have been the most difficult item to perfect since a full scale cartoon for the window was ordered in May 27, 1885, and the actual window was later “taken out and returned to Tiffany for necessary alterations and improvements” on more than one occasion as late as 1892.<sup>ccc</sup>

Filling the room, itself, were European antiques supplied by Jules Allard et Fils (1878-1906), including a large oblong table, an ornately carved and gilded Louis XV “Old Japanese Brown Lacquer...” sedan chair lined with elaborate embroidered velvet (Pl. 151), two suits of English armour (Pl. 152) that flanked the bottom of the staircase, as well as several period chairs.<sup>ccci</sup>

Off the main hall in what had been the entire first floor of No. 9, a new salon (Pl. 153) and ballroom were erected. While P. Hansson Hiss & Co. completed the majority of the structural work, the Garretts brought a number of workmen and artisans from New York at great expense to apply gold leaf and other luxury finishes.<sup>cccii</sup> With a large bay window overlooking the Mt. Vernon Place park, the Salon displayed a series of twelve eighteenth-century Royal Aubusson ‘Chinoiserie’ tapestries (Pl. 154 & 155).

Probably selected by Stanford White, the series was made of three distinct tapestry sets that were restored and given matching borders by Jules Allard.<sup>ccciii</sup> In addition to some reproduction pieces of furniture that included a handsome kingwood marqueterie and ormolu-mounted *bureau plat* (writing table; Pl. 156), a number of pieces of circa 1723-74 period seating furniture upholstered in Royal Beauvais landscape-patterned tapestries after cartoons by Jean Baptiste Oudry (1686-1755) were placed randomly around the room.<sup>ccciv</sup> The Allard firm used its skills at restoration to best utilize these particular tapestries that were based on the Fables of La Fontaine. They also replicated additional panels of like patterning for seats to make the canapés and chaises useable. The overall effect was an elegant and distinctive space, intended to impress much like Alva Vanderbilt's Salon at 660 Fifth Avenue in New York.

Adjoining the Salon, the Ballroom was described as "...a large room with the ceiling worked artistically in plaster and bronze with a floor of polished yellow pine, and with walls whose whiteness [were] relieved by the wainscoting of Italian marble."<sup>cccv</sup> The festive aura of the room was enhanced by the addition of a frieze painted by popular American artist Thomas Dewing (1851-1938) in accordance to a sketch he provided to McKim, Mead & White, "... done in oils on canvasses..., three sides to contain not less than six figures of children on each side, and the fireplace side not less than eight figures of children...."<sup>cccvi</sup> Opposite the doorway from the salon was a wall of glass windows installed by Herter Brothers that looked out to the conservatory.<sup>cccvii</sup>

Counted as one of the most extraordinary spaces in the house, the conservatory caught the eye of each and every guest of the Garretts. One critic described the effectiveness of the space, noting that:

“...standing back in the ballroom, the guests [could look] down a long vista sparkling with lights and radiant with rare exotic plants. In the distance, in the background of the conservatory, was a cascade of water [splashing] down a tall rockery into a large marble basin, in which goldfish were swimming... .”<sup>cccviii</sup>

Baltimore’s Hugh Sisson & Sons, “Importers, Dealers and Manufactures of Marble and Statuary,” installed a mammoth onyx fountain that served as another focal point, and on which exotic plants were placed, including “...one of the most valuable collections of orchids in the world.”<sup>cccix</sup> Incorporated into the fountain structure were four lions’ heads also carved of onyx. Originally intended for William H. Vanderbilt’s house in New York, these figures were promptly purchased by the Garretts after the sudden death of Mr. Vanderbilt made them surplus material.<sup>cccx</sup>

Electric lighting was also considered for the house, but after consulting Thomas Edison, the necessary generators were thought to have been too far from the house to be of practical use.<sup>cccxi</sup> Instead, gilt wrought-iron and bronze gas fixtures supplied by Archer & Pancost (dates unknown) were installed. However in 1889, some of these gas fixtures were converted to electricity when Marr Construction Company of Baltimore installed sixty-six lights, principally in the art gallery.<sup>cccxii</sup> For the official housewarming ball held on January 11, 1887, since electric lights had not yet been installed, five to six light “machines,” probably battery operated, were rented with the option for purchase at a later time. This series of devices, each with bulbs in the form of clusters of lilies, was used to illuminate the dome above the staircase, as well as several of the house’s windows.<sup>cccxiii</sup>

The Garretts’ housewarming ball proved as major a social success for winning acceptance among their peers as the costume ball held at 660 Fifth Avenue in New

York had been for William and Alva Vanderbilt almost four years before. Approximately 1,000 invitations were sent, of which approximately 600 were accepted. The event was praised by one reporter: "...[there has] never been such a distinguished social gathering in this city [Baltimore]."<sup>cccxiv</sup> Among the many guests were representatives of many of Maryland's oldest families, including members of the Carroll and Ridgely families, as well as artists, such as Albert Bierstadt (1830-1902), and international dignitaries, such as Baron Friedrich Johann Graf von Alvensleben (1836-1913) of the German Legation, in addition to U.S. Senator Eugene Hale (1836-1918) of Maine and Senator Matthew Calbraith Butler (1836-1909) of South Carolina.<sup>cccxv</sup> The morning following the ball, *The New York Times* published that:

"The guests [had begun] to arrive at about 10 o'clock... and it was not long before the festivities were opened. The elegance of the house, the beauty of the decorations, and the picturesque effects of the moonlight in the large conservatory... were all admired and praised...; During the intervals of dancing the couples promenaded in the conservatory adjoining the ballroom, which was a paradise of rare exotics, playing fountains, and bubbling springs, upon which the moonlight shone brightly. There were over a dozen numbers on the dancing card. Two orchestras furnished the music. The one in the hall played selections from the popular operas and the other gave the music for dancing. The supper was a triumph of gastronomic skill...served on cut glass and gold and silver plate, most of which was brought from Europe."<sup>cccxvi</sup>

Several years after Robert Garrett's premature death at 49, Mary Frick Garrett replicated the success of 11 Mt. Vernon Place by building a summer cottage called Whiteholme in Newport, Rhode Island (Pl. 157).<sup>cccxvii</sup> As Newport society was more diverse than Baltimore's, with both Mrs. Astor as well as several members of the Vanderbilt family summering in their 'cottages' by the sea (homes equal in size and comfort to many of the newly erected mansions in New York City), Newport would prove to be the ultimate challenge to obtain social acceptance. Mary Frick Garrett had

periodically spent her summers in the Rhode Island resort with her husband prior to 1882, staying in various rented cottages.<sup>cccxviii</sup> In 1901, years after her husband Robert's death, she acquired the Hitchcock-Travers cottage, which sat on three acres of land on the corner of Narragansett and Ochre Point Avenues. She promptly engaged the young aspiring American architect John Russell Pope (1874-1937) to remodel the house. Pope had the Hitchcock-Travers cottage moved towards the back of the property so a new stucco-over-brick addition could be constructed in front of the previous cottage, creating an impression of a French-style villa.<sup>cccxix</sup> The interiors were subcontracted by Pope to Jules Allard. Following the precedent of French style period rooms begun by Alva Vanderbilt, French eighteenth-century revival paneled rooms filled with complementary reproductions and antique furnishings were devised (Pl. 158-160).<sup>cccxx</sup> Mary Frick Garrett idealized and emulated Maria Antoinette, following the French-born fashion as her sister-in-law, Alice, and Alva Vanderbilt had done. In addition to a pillow in her sitting room (Pl. 160) with a representation of the ill-fated French queen based on a portrait by Elisabeth Louise Vigee-LeBrun (1755-1842), she acquired a *bureau plat* (writing table) (Pl. 161) by Jean-Henri Riesener (1734-1806).<sup>cccxxi</sup> A year after the house's completion, Mary Frick Garrett remarried. As a result of her marrying Dr. Henry Barton Jacobs (1858-1939) on April 2, 1902, Whiteholme simply became known as Dr. Barton Jacobs' residence.<sup>cccxxii</sup>

The same hefty tariff levied on imported works of art and antiques that caused J. P. Morgan to defer shipping the majority of his art collection to the United States until late in his life had induced the decorating firm of Jules Allard et Fils to smuggle in priceless treasures used in the homes of Mary Frick Garrett and Alva Vanderbilt - and to

pocket the import duties from the two as well as other clients.<sup>cccxxiii</sup> As reported in the period press: “The scheme pursued by the firm was to consign to their New-York house cabinet furniture, in which were concealed, underneath the marble tops and in the false paneling, costly portieres curtains and rich Gobelin tapestries.”<sup>cccxxiv</sup> Upon custom agents raiding the firm’s store “...a large quantity of chairs stuffed with rich laces, tapestries, silks, bronzes, portieres, curtains, and almost everything a person could imagine” in addition to “...a lot of tapestries valued at \$4,000, which they found packed in a plush sofa” were seized as evidence.<sup>cccxxv</sup> Extending over a period of more than ten years, it was reported that the Parisian firm “engaged in the most barefaced acts of smuggling.”<sup>cccxxvi</sup> During this period, goods were “purchased unsuspectingly from [the] firm by some of the wealthiest residences and most liberal art collectors...[in America],” including William K. Vanderbilt and Robert Garrett.<sup>cccxxvii</sup> William K. Vanderbilt’s portrait of his son, William Kissam Vanderbilt II (1878–1944), was cited as having been smuggled in duty free, concealed behind a mirror along with a “...large quantity of Gobelin tapestries, portieres, and articles of virtue.”<sup>cccxxviii</sup> It was ascertained from the government’s primary informant, Paul Roulez (dates unknown) – a disgruntled ex-employee of the firm’s New York branch – that the “...large quantity of rare and costly heavy silks used for making old Court dresses... [purchased by Robert Garrett] ... for covering circular chairs and sofas...” at No. 11 West Mt. Vernon Place were among the firm’s oldest documentable offenses.<sup>cccxxix</sup> The press reported at the time that the firm had evaded paying duties in excess of \$150,000 and estimated that the sum would probably amount closer to \$1,000,000 before the investigation was done.<sup>cccxxx</sup> While Jules Allard et Fils received negative attention for their behavior in the newspaper, their



clients, including the Vanderbilts and the Garretts, received sympathy from reporters as the victims of the swindle.

The rebellious Garrett tastes defied conservative Baltimore society and were met, as noted earlier, with some protest, but in the end, won Baltimoreans over. From utilizing new publications on interior decorating, T. Harrison Garrett and his wife Alice were able to pull from already critically acclaimed interiors to ensure their own social success. While Robert Garrett was preoccupied with business or otherwise incapacitated, Mary Frick Garrett, inspired by her passion for Maria Antoinette, followed Alva Vanderbilt's precedent of using Jules Allard et Fils to recreate eighteenth-century French rooms to become the queen of Baltimore society. The link between Mary Frick Garrett and Alva Vanderbilt only strengthened when both of their husbands were listed in the period press as victims of fraud. Scandals like this in which the press publicized the extravagant sums lavished on such homes as the Garretts' would lead sociologist Thorstein Veblen to develop his theory of "*conspicuous consumption*" in his book, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*. Despite this scandal, Mary Frick managed to hold her position as the leader of Baltimore society throughout her life, being dubbed "The Mrs. Astor of Maryland" in her *Baltimore Sun* obituary.<sup>cccxxxi</sup> The Garretts' homes, Evergreen, No. 11 West Mt. Vernon Place, and Whiteholme, illustrated the impact publication and personal relationships had on the decoration of wealthy Americans' homes.

## **William H. Vanderbilt's Maven 'Medicean' Part as American Royalty**

While many scholars have interpreted the William H. Vanderbilt drawing-room and its myriad of imitators and emulators as being purely representative of the Aesthetic Movement – a style that revolted against the mass-production of the industrial age in favor of handcraftsmanship and individualism, they represented something more. Art critic, Earl Shinn (1837-1886) defined the iconic Vanderbilt commission as “a typical American residence, seized at the moment when the nation began to have taste of its own,...[a moment when wealth was]...first consenting to act the Medicean part in America,...[and when Americans had begun]...to re-invent everything...especially the House.”<sup>cccxxxii</sup> Though this period assessment is certainly true with regard to Mr. Vanderbilt's 640 Fifth Avenue interiors and particularly his drawing-room, it still does not fully acknowledge the scope of what was achieved. With the American Industrial Revolution in full force and the subsequent creation of previously unimaginable fortunes, ‘wealth’ was redefined. Not merely assured by bank notes or stocks or land ownership, wealth had up until this time been defined by lineage. Mr. Vanderbilt – and his imitators – changed the latter criterion by employing connoisseurship – of fine, decorative, and literary arts, as well as architecture – as an equivalent of personal pedigree. Great mansions were built, adopting the architectural styles of Europe's most imposing palaces, chateaux, and villas. Inside, art and library collections were amassed – collections that rivaled any assigned to dukes, princes, and kings of the past. These edifices – and their amazing holdings – became the monikers of a new American aristocracy.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, wealthy Americans had looked to contemporary European fashion for design inspiration as they had done since the

Colonial period. With the development of world's fairs and expositions, starting with the 1851 Great Exhibition, a large portion of the western population was introduced to a far greater variety of design options than before available.<sup>cccxxxiii</sup> A proliferation of new publications were developed that augmented the previous limited treatises on design to include more comprehensive options, some filled with a plethora of awe-inspiring color illustrations. As a result, the public began to excogitate existing laissez-faire attitudes towards design and contemplate the suitability of various design options for certain applications. Eventually Italianate classicism became the accepted style for homes for the well-to-do in Britain. Deemed suitable through exposure to grand and elegant Renaissance and Baroque interiors of medieval fortresses seen during a gentleman's or lady's *necessary* grand tour of Italy, the English aristocracy adopted this imposing style for their townhouses and country residences; such as by the Fourth Duke of Northumberland, Algernon Percy (1792-1865), at his country estate, Alnwick Castle, in Northumberland, England.<sup>cccxxxiv</sup> With the preference for Italianate classicism set by the English aristocracy and with the ready supply of artisans and firms established and promoted through world's fairs it did not take long for Americans to pick up items and ideas for the furnishing of their own houses across the Atlantic. As with wealthy Europeans, their American counterparts obtained items for their homes from international exhibitions. An example of such is the pair of monumental mirrors dominating the ballroom at Chateau-sur-Mer, the Newport, Rhode Island residence of a wealthy American China trade merchant, William Shepherd Wetmore (1801-1862), which he acquired at the 1853 New York Crystal Palace Exhibition.<sup>cccxxxv</sup> It was only natural that William Shepherd Wetmore's son, George Peabody Wetmore (1846 -1921),

after inheriting his father's fortune in 1862, would take American interior decorating to the next level, hiring Richard Morris Hunt (1827-1895), America's first graduate from Paris' École des Beaux-Arts, to remodel and enlarge Chateau-sur-Mer.<sup>cccxxxvi</sup> As part of the house's 1877-78 renovations, the dining room and library were decorated in the Renaissance revival style, with paneled walls carved in the Florentine workshop of Luigi Frullini (1839-1897), disassembled, crated, and shipped to Newport, where they were reassembled and installed.<sup>cccxxxvii</sup> Though these truly European rooms would be recognized as an expensive luxury few could afford, appearing cumbersome and heavy compared to later 'imported' or European-derived interiors commissioned by the Wetmores' contemporaries, they all the same would be recognized for their exceptional levels of refinement, and, thus, would prove beneficial to enhancing the social positions of their owners.

Indeed, when William H. Vanderbilt, America's wealthiest industrialist of the period, decided to erect his palatial new residence at 640 Fifth Avenue in New York, his goal was to create a new style through which he would obtain social acceptance. Seeing himself as America's equivalent to a Florentine Medici prince of the Italian Renaissance, Vanderbilt modeled his new residence after Renaissance prototypes following the precedent of the English aristocracy, such as the Fourth Duke of Northumberland. Relying principally on a network of artisans and firms in New York, he was able to regularly visit those involved with the building of his great house, most notable the distinguished decorating firm of Herter Brother (1864-1906). Through such dedicated scrutiny, he ensured every detail met with his exacting expectations. With the aid of American expatriate and art collector George Lucas (1857-1909), Vanderbilt was

able to successfully emulate great historic art patrons such as Cosimo de' Medici (1389 - 1464) through the commissioning the ceiling mural by Pierre-Victor Galland (1822-1892) and other furnishings for his drawing-room. Also through Lucas, William H. Vanderbilt would introduce and endorse the Parisian decorating firm of Jules Allard et Fils (1878-1906) to an eager American audience desiring adoption of a then burgeoning appetite for accurate interpretations of architecture and interior design affiliated with the eighteenth-century Bourbon court of France. Promoting himself as the head of America's equivalent to the Medici Family, William H. Vanderbilt commissioned the art critique Earl Shinn (1838-1886) to write the fully illustrated 1883-84 catalogue of his house, *Mr. Vanderbilt's House and Collection*, to publicize and perpetuate the successes of his new, largely Florentine-inspired style.

William H. Vanderbilt's daughter-in-law, Alva Smith Vanderbilt (1853-1933), would take the leading role in the design and decoration decisions for her own new residence at 660 Fifth Avenue. Aiming to create a symbol of social power equivalent to the Medici Palace in Florence, she broke with the period preference for brownstone in favor of limestone. Utilizing Herter Brothers to oversee the execution and furnishing of the majority of the interiors, particularly the mammoth Banqueting Hall, she borrowed greatly and at the same time expanded upon the symbolic importance of her father-in-law's drawing-room's Renaissance inspired decoration. During 660's construction, and with the advent of the Hamilton Palace sale in 1882, Alva deviated away from the Florentine-inspired style of her father-in-law, opting to create her own interpretation of French eighteenth-century interiors that served as a more suitable backdrop for two pieces of Royal French furniture made by iconic ébéniste Jean-Henri Riesener (1734–

1806) for Marie Antoinette (1755-1793) that she acquired from the Hamilton Palace sale; the acquisition of these two highly important, world renowned pieces no doubt aided her efforts to secure the coveted role of queen of New York society. Despite deviating from her father-in-law's Florentine inspired drawing-room's décor, Alva successfully maintained his initial concept of using interior decorating to secure social acceptance. Though she substituted Bourbon pedigree and influences for those of the Medici, Alva utilized William H. Vanderbilt's network of craftsmen and designers to achieve the same end result. Even almost a decade later for her Newport 'cottage,' Marble House, elements of William H. Vanderbilt's Florentine inspired style persisted within Alva's French-born interiors. This was illustrated by the clock included in the only guest room in the house. Alva's adaptation of William H. Vanderbilt's Renaissance-inspired style demonstrated not only the flexibility of the style, but also the potency of his general vision to utilize European historical styles for the purpose of establishing concrete parallels between his residence and those of contemporary European aristocracy, and thus, assuring social acceptance via emulation and ultimately achieving social ascendancy.

Outside the Vanderbilt family others adopted William H. Vanderbilt's style for their own houses. J. Pierpont Morgan (1837-1913) and his second wife Frances Louisa Tracy ("Fanny"; 1842-1924), recognized Vanderbilt as an arbiter of taste after attending his house warming at 640 Fifth Avenue. The Morgans adapted his Florentine theme and like Alva assimilated it into their own 'Pompeiiian' inspired drawing-room at their residence at Thirty-sixth Street and Madison Avenue. Incorporating specific Vanderbilt elements for their own residence, the Morgans went so far as to acquire variations of

specific pieces from the earlier drawing-room, including the mother-of-pearl-inlaid side chairs with deer hoof-like feet. With a favorable review in *Artistic Houses* the socially secure Morgans' endorsement of William H. Vanderbilt's Florentine model confirmed the latter's newly secured status as an American tastemaker and society leader. The inclusion of the Morgan drawing-room in the ever increasingly important new design and pattern books further perpetuated and accelerated the diffusion of this trend, both in New York City and elsewhere.

In Baltimore, where established conservative social norms looked down upon the inordinate entertaining associated with New York and Newport, William H. Vanderbilt's objective of securing social acceptance through the design of imposing personal stages resonated with the 'Monument City's' ever-expanding group of new millionaires. The Garrett family in particular broke with traditional norms to adopt the New York trend. Thomas Harrison Garrett (1849-1888) and his wife Alice Whitridge Garrett (1851-1920) were able to draw from the already iconic Vanderbilt and Morgan drawing-rooms to create an image of themselves as sophisticated American collectors when they renovated their Baltimore country residence, Evergreen. Through Herter Brothers, who had been the principal decorating firm behind both William H. Vanderbilt's and J.P. Morgan's drawing-rooms, the Garretts were able to obtain versions of several pieces of furniture from these acclaimed interiors, as well as new furnishings and finishes that embodied the vigor of Vanderbilt's vision. These were epitomized in Evergreen's innovative mosaic floor that incorporated Medici derived decorative devices borrowing from Renaissance models. Local Baltimore firms such as P. Hanson Hiss & Co. (1864-

?) were also brought into the mix; with the Garretts as clients they quickly adopted New York decorating vocabularies into their already established repertoire.

T. Harrison's brother, Robert Garrett (1847-1896), and his wife, Mary Frick Garrett (1851-1936) also followed the same course of action for their house at No. 11 West Mt. Vernon Place.<sup>cccxxxviii</sup> Employing New York-based firms and Baltimore's most prestigious decorating house, P. Hanson Hiss & Co., they achieved a similar affect inside their Mt. Vernon Place townhouse, allowing Mary Frick Garrett to obtain social supremacy in Baltimore. Mrs. Robert Garrett would also experience severe drawback and criticism when she was exposed as a victim of fraud by Jules Allard et Fils (1878-1906). This unexpected hurdle would only strengthen the connection between Mary Frick Garrett and Alva Vanderbilt, also cited as victim of the Allard fraud.

By the end of the nineteenth century, however, the path that led to the popularity of American Renaissance revival interiors waivered and French eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century period rooms came into favor. Before this transition in taste took full hold of the American decorating lexicon, the first major American treatise on interior decorating, *The Decoration of Houses*, by Edith Wharton (1862-1937) and Odgen Codman (1863-1951), was published in 1897. In one passage the socially astute authors referenced the decoration of Italian Renaissance public rooms, calling them 'gala' rooms, worthy of emulation by Americans. They noted:

"[I]n many old Italian prints and pictures there are representations of these saloons, with groups of gaily dressed people looking down from the gallery.... In Italy the architectural decoration of large rooms was often entirely painted, the plaster walls being covered with a fanciful piling-up of statues, porticos and balustrade's, while figures in Oriental costume, or in the masks and particolored dress of the Comedie Italienne, leaned from simulated loggias or wandered through marble columns."<sup>cccxxxix</sup>



While *The Decoration of Houses* looked back with reverence and nostalgia, its authors principally looked forward to the future of interior design. They used this brief decorating history to validate their own preferred Francophilia - Bourbon court-inspired style that would surpass in popularity the socially driven Florentine Renaissance revival developed by William H. Vanderbilt years earlier. However, the subsequent French revival style would never take interior design to the same level of originality, as William H. Vanderbilt's had done, leading instead, to an ever increasing dependency on historical accuracy and purity. Still vestiges of William H. Vanderbilt's taste continued to appear in new interiors and by new means of application. Up until the first world war, the Vanderbilt drawing-room and its legacy, together, remained a motivating force behind America's new class of unimaginably wealthy individuals and their adaptation of bits and pieces of the great palaces and castles of Europe to bolster and ultimately secure their places as America's newly-ordained aristocracy.

## Notes

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<sup>i</sup> Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Mr. Vanderbilt's House and Collection*. 4 vols. (Boston, New York, and Philadelphia: George Barrie, 1883-84), v, vi.

<sup>ii</sup> Jonathan Meyer, *Great Exhibitions: London – New York – Paris Philadelphia 1851-1900* (China: Antiques Collectors' Club, Ltd., Woodbridge, Suffolk, England, 2006), 18.

<sup>iii</sup> It was recorded that 6,063,986 people attained the 185 Crystal Palace Exhibition. For further information pertaining to this exhibition see: Jonathan Meyer, *Great Exhibitions: London – New York – Paris Philadelphia 1851-1900* (China: Antiques Collectors' Club, Ltd., Woodbridge, Suffolk, England, 2006), 14 & 51.

<sup>iv</sup> Michael Hall, *Lasting Elegance: English Country Houses 1830-1900*. (New York: The Monacelli Press, 2009), 49.

<sup>v</sup> Michael Hall, *Lasting Elegance: English Country Houses 1830-1900*. (New York: The Monacelli Press, 2009), 49. & Jonathan Meyer, *Great Exhibitions: London – New York – Paris Philadelphia 1851-1900* (China: Antiques Collectors' Club, Ltd., Woodbridge, Suffolk, England, 2006), 19.

<sup>vi</sup> Deborah C. Cavendish (The Duchess of Devonshire), *Chatsworth: The House*. (London: Frances Lincoln Ltd., 2002), 24, 126-130.

<sup>vii</sup> *Ibid.*, 48 & 131.

<sup>viii</sup> Dr. Colin Shrimpton, *Alnwick Castle: Home of the Duke of Northumberland* (Derby: English Life Publications Ltd, 1999), 26.

<sup>ix</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>x</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

<sup>xi</sup> Michael Hall, *Lasting Elegance: English Country Houses 1830-1900*. (New York: The Monacelli Press, 2009), 51, 55.

<sup>xii</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.

<sup>xiii</sup> *Ibid.*, 36, 52, 55.

<sup>xiv</sup> Dr. Colin Shrimpton, *Alnwick Castle: Home of the Duke of Northumberland* (Derby: English Life Publications Ltd, 1999), 26.

<sup>xv</sup> Michael Hall, *Lasting Elegance: English Country Houses 1830-1900*. (New York: The Monacelli Press, 2009), 37 & 40.

<sup>xvi</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>xvii</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>xviii</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>xix</sup> Observations on the souvenirs brought back by Americans from 1880-1900 based on the items collected by members of the Garrett Family in Baltimore. See Mrs. T. Harrison Garrett's photo albumens

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in the collection of Evergreen Foundation at Evergreen House and Library owned by Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland.

<sup>xx</sup> Ann Benway, *A Guidebook to Newport Mansions: of the Preservation Society of Newport County*. (Hong Kong: Fort Church Publishers, Inc., 1984), 24. & Arnold Lewis et al., *The Opulent Interiors of the Gilded Age: All 203 Photographs from "Artistic Houses."* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1987), 170.

<sup>xxi</sup> Ann Benway, *A Guidebook to Newport Mansions: of the Preservation Society of Newport County*. (Hong Kong: Fort Church Publishers, Inc., 1984), 29.

<sup>xxii</sup> Ann Benway, *A Guidebook to Newport Mansions: of the Preservation Society of Newport County*. (Hong Kong: Fort Church Publishers, Inc., 1984), 24-25. & Arnold Lewis et al., *The Opulent Interiors of the Gilded Age: All 203 Photographs from "Artistic Houses."* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1987), 170.

<sup>xxiii</sup> Arnold Lewis et al., *The Opulent Interiors of the Gilded Age: All 203 Photographs from "Artistic Houses."* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1987), 170.

<sup>xxiv</sup> *Ibid.*, 170.

<sup>xxv</sup> Ann Benway, *A Guidebook to Newport Mansions: of the Preservation Society of Newport County*. (Hong Kong: Fort Church Publishers, Inc., 1984), 29.

<sup>xxvi</sup> Ann Benway, *A Guidebook to Newport Mansions: of the Preservation Society of Newport County*. (Hong Kong: Fort Church Publishers, Inc., 1984), 29. & Arnold Lewis et al., *The Opulent Interiors of the Gilded Age: All 203 Photographs from "Artistic Houses."* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1987), 170.

<sup>xxvii</sup> Samuel White, and Elizabeth White. *McKim, Mead & White: The Masterworks*. (New York: Rizzoli, 2003), 121.

<sup>xxviii</sup> Doreen B. Burke et al., *In Pursuit of Beauty: Americans and the Aesthetic Movement* (New York: Doreen Bolger Burke, 1986), 120.

<sup>xxix</sup> Robert Stern, *New York 1880: Architecture and Urbanism in the Gilded Age*. (New York: Monacelli, 1999), 582.

<sup>xxx</sup> *Ibid.*, 582-583.

<sup>xxxi</sup> John Foremanand, and Robbe Stimson, *The Vanderbilts and the Gilded Age: Architectural Aspirations, 1879-1901*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 310.

<sup>xxxii</sup> Robert Stern, *New York 1880: Architecture and Urbanism in the Gilded Age*. (New York: Monacelli, 1999), 583.

<sup>xxxiii</sup> *Ibid.*, 578.

<sup>xxxiv</sup> *Ibid.*, 578-9.

<sup>xxxv</sup> John Foremanand, and Robbe Stimson, *The Vanderbilts and the Gilded Age: Architectural Aspirations, 1879-1901*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 310.

<sup>xxxvi</sup> *Ibid.*, 310.

<sup>xxxvii</sup> *Ibid.*, 310.

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<sup>xxxviii</sup> Marvin Trachtenberg, and Isabelle Hyman. *Architecture: from Prehistory to Postmodernist*. (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1986), 284-85.

<sup>xxxix</sup> Arnold Lewis et al., *The Opulent Interiors of the Gilded Age: All 203 Photographs from "Artistic Houses."* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1987), 116.

<sup>xi</sup> Robert Stern, *New York 1880: Architecture and Urbanism in the Gilded Age*. (New York: Monacelli, 1999), 570, 572.

<sup>xli</sup> *Ibid.*, 578, 582.

<sup>xlii</sup> Jerry E. Patterson, *The Vanderbilts*. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, 1989), 30.

<sup>xliii</sup> For a more in-depth discussion of 'New Money' in New York City in late nineteenth-century America and Anthony Trollope 1861's period observations see: Robert Stern, *New York 1880: Architecture and Urbanism in the Gilded Age*. (New York: Monacelli, 1999), 571.

<sup>xliv</sup> Jerry E. Patterson, *The Vanderbilts*. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, 1989), 32. printed fragment of letter from the Commander to a friend of a deceased associate requesting him "to com down and sea the widow."

<sup>xlv</sup> Robert Stern, *New York 1880: Architecture and Urbanism in the Gilded Age*. (New York: Monacelli, 1999), 578.

<sup>xlvi</sup> *Ibid.*, 578, 582.

<sup>xlvii</sup> *Ibid.*, 571-572.

<sup>xlviii</sup> John Foremanand, and Robbe Stimson, *The Vanderbilts and the Gilded Age: Architectural Aspirations, 1879-1901*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 311.

<sup>xlix</sup> Catherine H. Voorsanger et al., *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age*. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, inc., 1994), 230. & John Foremanand, and Robbe Stimson, *The Vanderbilts and the Gilded Age: Architectural Aspirations, 1879-1901*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991),. 311-13.

<sup>i</sup> Interior of 459 Fifth Avenue completed by Herter Brothers in 1878. See Catherine H. Voorsanger et al., *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age*. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, inc., 1994), 176.

<sup>ii</sup> Initially Snook and Artwood recommended light-colored Ohio limestone articulated with red and black marble for the façade. It was only on William H. Vanderbilt's insistence in 1879 that the exterior was clad in brownstone in order to shorten the construction time. For further information see John Foremanand, and Robbe Stimson, *The Vanderbilts and the Gilded Age: Architectural Aspirations, 1879-1901*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 313.

<sup>iii</sup> *Ibid.*, 313.

<sup>iiii</sup> *Ibid.*, 311-13.

<sup>liv</sup> *European and American Furniture & Decorative Arts*. Sale cat. (Los Angeles: Butterfields and Butterfield, Sept.17 and 18th 1996 in Los Angeles), 35.

<sup>lv</sup> John Foremanand, and Robbe Stimson, *The Vanderbilts and the Gilded Age: Architectural Aspirations, 1879-1901*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 315.

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<sup>lvi</sup> Ibid., 47.

<sup>lvii</sup> Ibid., 53.

<sup>lviii</sup> Arnold Lewis et al., *The Opulent Interiors of the Gilded Age: All 203 Photographs from "Artistic Houses."* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1987), 116.

<sup>lix</sup> For further notes on 640 Fifth Avenue see Michael C. Kathrens, *Great Houses of New York 1880-1930.* (New York: Acanthus Press, 2005), 330-339.

<sup>lx</sup> Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Mr. Vanderbilt's House and Collection.* 4 vols. (Boston, New York, and Philadelphia: George Barrie, 1883-84), 47-48. (image of corner of the room)

<sup>lxi</sup> The silver spangle textile installed above the Italian woven velvet in the drawing-room at Clayton is similar to the textile used for William H. Vanderbilt's drawing-room at 640 Fifth Avenue. It was installed in 1883. See John Foreman and Robbe Stimson, *The Vanderbilts and the Gilded Age: Architectural Aspirations, 1879-1901.* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 316. & Mary Brignano, *The Frick Art & Historical Center: The Art and Life of a Pittsburgh Family.* (Italy: Amilcare Pizzi, s.p.a., 1993), 24.

<sup>lxii</sup> Catherine H. Voorsanger et al., *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age.* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, inc., 1994), 225, 235, 238.

<sup>lxiii</sup> Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Mr. Vanderbilt's House and Collection.* 4 vols. (Boston, New York, and Philadelphia: George Barrie, 1883-84), 21, 34, 44. & Catherine H. Voorsanger et al., *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age.* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, inc., 1994), 229.

<sup>lxiv</sup> Arnold Lewis et al., *The Opulent Interiors of the Gilded Age: All 203 Photographs from "Artistic Houses."* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1987), 114.

<sup>lxv</sup> William Baumgarten, cited in James T. Maher, *The Twilight of Splendor: Chronicles of the Age of American Palaces* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1975), pp. xvi-xvii.

<sup>lxvi</sup> Catherine H. Voorsanger et al., *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age.* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, inc., 1994), 202-3.

<sup>lxvii</sup> Ibid., 202-3.

<sup>lxviii</sup> Description based on an illustration entitled "portion of the frieze in ceiling" drawn by Thurwanger published in Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Mr. Vanderbilt's House and Collection.* 4 vols. (Boston, New York, and Philadelphia: George Barrie, 1883-84), n/a.

<sup>lxix</sup> Observation based in an illustration in Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Mr. Vanderbilt's House and Collection.* 4 vols. (Boston, New York, and Philadelphia: George Barrie, 1883-84), 51.

<sup>lxx</sup> Illustration of column pedestals in Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Mr. Vanderbilt's House and Collection.* 4 vols. (Boston, New York, and Philadelphia: George Barrie, 1883-84), 53. The capitals of the Vanderbilt columns are almost identical to those used for the pilasters in the main hall of Ross R. Wiana's House in Baltimore designed by Stanford White in 1882.

<sup>lxxi</sup> *European and American Furniture & Decorative Arts.* Sale cat. (Los Angeles: Butterfields and Butterfield, Sept. 17 and 18th 1996 in Los Angeles), lot 4183, 35.

<sup>lxxii</sup> The grotesque style was developed after the discovery of the ruins of Nero's Golden House in Rome, towards the end of the fifteenth century.

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<sup>lxxiii</sup> Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Mr. Vanderbilt's House and Collection*. 4 vols. (Boston, New York, and Philadelphia: George Barrie, 1883-84), 50.

<sup>lxxiv</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

<sup>lxxv</sup> *Ibid.*, 53. note reproductions by foundry mark, *F. Barbedienne, fondateur*. Circular mark on square base, *Achille Collas Reduction Mechanique Brevette*.

<sup>lxxvi</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>lxxvii</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>lxxviii</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>lxxix</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>lxxx</sup> George Lucas recorded William H. Vanderbilt going to Sichels to see tapestries on May 31, 1880, on June 19<sup>th</sup> they go to Lievre to look at furniture and 'WHV' buys a piece of furniture from Lievre for 6000 fs on June 22<sup>nd</sup> 1880 Nov. 3, 1880 note of enamels being shipped from Paris by George Lucas purchased by W. H. Vanderbilt. See Lilian Randall C., *The Diary of George A. Lucas: An American Art Agent in Paris, 1857-1909*. (2 vols). (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 499 & 508. & Observation based in a plate of the "Corner in the Drawing-room: with Cloisonné Cabinet" drawn by M. Gaulard in Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Mr. Vanderbilt's House and Collection*. 4 vols. (Boston, New York, and Philadelphia: George Barrie, 1883-84), 54-55.

<sup>lxxxi</sup> Catherine H. Voorsanger et al., *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age*. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, inc., 1994), 98-99.

<sup>lxxxii</sup> *Ibid.*, 98.

<sup>lxxxiii</sup> Kenneth L. Ames, "Designed in France: Notes on the Transmission of French Style to America," Winterthur portfolio 12 (1977), 103-14.

<sup>lxxxiv</sup> Jonathan Meyer, *Great Exhibitions: London – New York – Paris Philadelphia 1851-1900* (China: Antiques Collectors' Club, Ltd., Woodbridge, Suffolk, England, 2006), 100.

<sup>lxxxv</sup> *Ibid.*, 100.

<sup>lxxxvi</sup> Catherine H. Voorsanger et al., *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age*. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, inc., 1994), 99. & Jerry E. Patterson, *The Vanderbilts*. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, 1989), 93.

<sup>lxxxvii</sup> William Thompson Walters (1819-1894) was a contemporary of William H. Vanderbilt. He was an honorary U.S. commissioner to the Vienna World's Fair, as well as the first chairman of the acquisitions committee of the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC. Walters also was a renowned patron and collector of art and opened his own private galleries at his residence at 5 West Mount Vernon Place, Baltimore, Maryland, to the public every spring, charging a 50-cent fee that went to charity. The set of gates purchased by W.T. Walters were sent by Lherbette in two crates to the Peabody Institute, Baltimore, Maryland in October 17, 1879, but is not the set of gilt gates by Barbedienne that are installed in there. The gates identical to those acquired by the Walters were presented as a gift to the Peabody by John Work Garrett. See Lilian Randall C., *The Diary of George A. Lucas: An American Art Agent in Paris, 1857-1909*. (2 vols). (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 478.

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<sup>lxxxviii</sup> Jonathan Meyer, *Great Exhibitions: London – New York – Paris Philadelphia 1851-1900* (China: Antiques Collectors' Club, Ltd., Woodbridge, Suffolk, England, 2006), 17 & 135 & 199 & 224.

<sup>lxxxix</sup> Child, Theodore. "Ferdinand Barbedienne," *Harpers New Monthly Magazine* Vol. 73, No. 436, Sept. (1886): 504.

<sup>xc</sup> Peter Thorton, *Form & Decoration: Innovation n the Decorative Arts 1470-1870*. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, 1998), 208.

<sup>xc<sup>i</sup></sup> Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Mr. Vanderbilt's House and Collection*. 4 vols. (Boston, New York, and Philadelphia: George Barrie, 1883-84), 51.

<sup>xc<sup>ii</sup></sup> Lilian, C. Randall, *The Diary of George A. Lucas: An American Art Agent in Paris, 1857-1909*. (2 vols). Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979, pp. 498-99.

<sup>xc<sup>iii</sup></sup> Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Mr. Vanderbilt's House and Collection*. 4 vols. (Boston, New York, and Philadelphia: George Barrie, 1883-84), 51.

<sup>xc<sup>iv</sup></sup> Watson, Francis. *The History of Furniture*. (New York: William Morrow & Company, Inc., 1976), 33.

<sup>xc<sup>v</sup></sup> *Ibid.*, 73.

<sup>xc<sup>vi</sup></sup> Michael Hall, *Lasting Elegance: English Country Houses 1830-1900*. (New York: The Monacelli Press, 2009), 50-55. & Dr. Colin Shrimpton, *Alnwick Castle: Home of the Duke of Northumberland* (Derby: English Life Publications Ltd, 1999), 40.

<sup>xc<sup>vii</sup></sup> Jonathan Meyer, *Great Exhibitions: London – New York – Paris Philadelphia 1851-1900* (China: Antiques Collectors' Club, Ltd., Woodbridge, Suffolk, England, 2006), 119.

<sup>xc<sup>viii</sup></sup> *Ibid.*, 141.

<sup>xc<sup>ix</sup></sup> *Ibid.*, 252.

<sup>c</sup> Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Mr. Vanderbilt's House and Collection*. 4 vols. (Boston, New York, and Philadelphia: George Barrie, 1883-84), 54.

<sup>ci</sup> Cabinet's dimensions: Height 52 ½ inches; width 25 1/2 inches also see *The Collection of William H. Vanderbilt inherited by Brig. General Cornelius Vanderbilt*. Sale cat. (New York: Parke Bernet, April 18 and 19, 1945), lot 368-9 & 376-7, 82 & 84.

<sup>c<sup>ii</sup></sup> Observation based in a plate of the "Corner in the Drawing-room: Photogravure" in Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Mr. Vanderbilt's House and Collection*. 4 vols. (Boston, New York, and Philadelphia: George Barrie, 1883-84), between 56-57. & see 54.

<sup>c<sup>iii</sup></sup> Lilian Randall C., *The Diary of George A. Lucas: An American Art Agent in Paris, 1857-1909*. (2 vols.). (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 508.

<sup>c<sup>iv</sup></sup> Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Mr. Vanderbilt's House and Collection*. 4 vols. (Boston, New York, and Philadelphia: George Barrie, 1883-84), 51, 53.

<sup>c<sup>v</sup></sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

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<sup>cvi</sup> Observation based in an illustration of “Bronze Fire-gilt Table, with Cloisonné Enamel Cabinet by Barbedienne. Designed by Ch. Goutzwiller” in Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Mr. Vanderbilt’s House and Collection*. 4 vols. (Boston, New York, and Philadelphia: George Barrie, 1883-84), 53.

<sup>cvii</sup> Observation based in a plate of the “Corner in the Drawing-room: with Cloisonné Cabinet” drawn by M. Gaulard in Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Mr. Vanderbilt’s House and Collection*. 4 vols. (Boston, New York, and Philadelphia: George Barrie, 1883-84), 54-55. Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Mr. Vanderbilt’s House and Collection*. 4 vols. (Boston, New York, and Philadelphia: George Barrie, 1883-84), n/a.

<sup>cviii</sup> The Collection of William H. Vanderbilt inherited by Brig. General Cornelius Vanderbilt. Sale cat. (New York: Parke Bernet, April 18 and 19, 1945), lot 367, 82.

<sup>cxix</sup> The Papers of Thomas A. Edison: Electrifying New York and Abroad, April 1881-March 1883 (Volume 6) Paul B. Israel (Editor Johns Hopkins University Press 2007page unknown?)

<sup>cx</sup> Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Mr. Vanderbilt’s House and Collection*. 4 vols. (Boston, New York, and Philadelphia: George Barrie, 1883-84), 51.

<sup>cxix</sup> *Ibid.*, 10, 53-54.

<sup>cxii</sup> Raphael Gargiulo, *Of the Most Remarkable Monuments of the National Museum of Naples*. (Naples: Gargiulo.by the Museo Nazionale di Napoli, 1868), n/a.

<sup>cxiii</sup> Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Mr. Vanderbilt’s House and Collection*. 4 vols. (Boston, New York, and Philadelphia: George Barrie, 1883-84), 48,51 & 519.

<sup>cxiv</sup> Jerry E. Patterson, *The Vanderbilts*. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, 1989), 86.

<sup>cxv</sup> Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Mr. Vanderbilt’s House and Collection*. 4 vols. (Boston, New York, and Philadelphia: George Barrie, 1883-84), 48.

<sup>cxvi</sup> Pierre-Victor Galland was commissioned in 1869 by LeGrand Lockwood to paint the ceiling painting depicting “Venus at Play with her Cupids” at a cost of \$20,000 the drawing-room in his house in Norwalk, Connecticut. Galland was also responsible for the paintings of Terpsichore and Thalia’s heads in profile also installed in the drawing-room ceiling as well as designing the etched glass panel above the fireplace by Herter Brothers in the Music Room. For more information on LeGrand Lockwood and his house see: Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Mr. Vanderbilt’s House and Collection*. 4 vols. (Boston, New York, and Philadelphia: George Barrie, 1883-84), 48. & Mimi Findlay, and Doris E. Friend. *The Lockwood-Mathews Mansion*. (New York: Pandick Press, Inc., 1981), 25.

<sup>cxvii</sup> Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Mr. Vanderbilt’s House and Collection*. 4 vols. (Boston, New York, and Philadelphia: George Barrie, 1883-84), 50.

<sup>cxviii</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.

<sup>cxix</sup> Lilian Randall C., *The Diary of George A. Lucas: An American Art Agent in Paris, 1857-1909*. (2 vols). (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 516.

<sup>cxix</sup> May 31, 1879 entry, see Lilian Randall C., *The Diary of George A. Lucas: An American Art Agent in Paris, 1857-1909*. (2 vols). (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 474.

<sup>cxix</sup> Mr. Vanderbilt at Lefebvres seeing and approving a sketch of “la toilette de la mariee” for his picture. See (Lilian Randall C., *The Diary of George A. Lucas: An American Art Agent in Paris, 1857-1909*. (2 vols). (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 497.



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<sup>cxxii</sup> June 9 1880 entry records Mr. Vanderbilt's commissions given to Lefebvres to paint a portrait of his daughter[possibly Margaret Shepard (1845-1924), Emily Sloan (1852-1946), Florence Adele Twombly (1854-1952), or Lila Webb (1860-1936)] and agrees to pay 6000 fs. & Aug. 23, 1880 entry records Mr. Vanderbilt and George Lucas visit Levebre and commissions him to paint the canvases for the ceiling of Mrs. Vanderbilt's chamber for 50,000fs. See Lilian Randall C., *The Diary of George A. Lucas: An American Art Agent in Paris, 1857-1909*. (2 vols). (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 497.

<sup>cxxiii</sup> The Collection of William H. Vanderbilt inherited by Brig. General Cornelius Vanderbilt. Sale cat. (New York: Parke Bernet, April 18 and 19, 1945), lots 82 & 326, 40.

<sup>cxxiv</sup> Lilian Randall C., *The Diary of George A. Lucas: An American Art Agent in Paris, 1857-1909*. (2 vols). (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 520, 526, 534.

<sup>cxxv</sup> John Foremanand, and Robbe Stimson, *The Vanderbilts and the Gilded Age: Architectural Aspirations, 1879-1901*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 313.

<sup>cxxvi</sup> June 13, 1881 entry Lucus notes William H. Vanderbilt "commission for portiers & tapestries." See Lilian Randall C., *The Diary of George A. Lucas: An American Art Agent in Paris, 1857-1909*. (2 vols). (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 522.

<sup>cxxvii</sup> John Foremanand, and Robbe Stimson, *The Vanderbilts and the Gilded Age: Architectural Aspirations, 1879-1901*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 315.

<sup>cxxviii</sup> *Ibid.*, 316.

<sup>cxxix</sup> *Ibid.*, 317.

<sup>cxxxx</sup> *Ibid.*, 318.

<sup>cxxxi</sup> *Ibid.*, 318.

<sup>cxxxii</sup> *The Collection of William H. Vanderbilt inherited by Brig. General Cornelius Vanderbilt*. Sale cat. (New York: Parke Bernet, April 18 and 19, 1945), lot 326A. & John Foremanand, and Robbe Stimson, *The Vanderbilts and the Gilded Age: Architectural Aspirations, 1879-1901*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 323.

<sup>cxxxiii</sup> Jerry E. Patterson, *The Vanderbilts*. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, 1989), 120.

<sup>cxxxiv</sup> John Foremanand, and Robbe Stimson, *The Vanderbilts and the Gilded Age: Architectural Aspirations, 1879-1901*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 31.

<sup>cxxxv</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>cxxxvi</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>cxxxvii</sup> Jerry E. Patterson, *The Vanderbilts*. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, 1989), 118.

<sup>cxxxviii</sup> John Foremanand, and Robbe Stimson, *The Vanderbilts and the Gilded Age: Architectural Aspirations, 1879-1901*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 31-32.

<sup>cxxxix</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>cxl</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

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- cxli Ibid., 24.
- cxlii Ibid., 311.
- cxliii John Van Pelt Vredenburg Van Pelt. *A Monograph of the William K. Vanderbilt House: Richard Morris Hunt Architect*, (New York: John Vredenburg Van Pelt, 1925), 11.
- cxliv Ibid., 11.
- cxlv Robert Stern, *New York 1880: Architecture and Urbanism in the Gilded Age*. (New York: Monacelli, 1999), 592.
- cxlvi Virginia Brilliant, *Gothic Art in the Gilded Age: Medieval and Renaissance Treasures in the Gavet-Vanderbilt-Ringling Collection*. (Pittsburgh: Gutenberg Periscope Publishing, Ltd., 2009), 10, 177, and 249.
- cxlvii Robert Stern, *New York 1880: Architecture and Urbanism in the Gilded Age*. (New York: Monacelli, 1999), 592.
- cxlviii John Foremanand, and Robbe Stimson, *The Vanderbilts and the Gilded Age: Architectural Aspirations, 1879-1901*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 28.
- cxlix Robert Stern, *New York 1880: Architecture and Urbanism in the Gilded Age*. (New York: Monacelli, 1999), 592.
- cl John Foremanand, and Robbe Stimson, *The Vanderbilts and the Gilded Age: Architectural Aspirations, 1879-1901*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 28.
- cli Virginia Brilliant, *Gothic Art in the Gilded Age: Medieval and Renaissance Treasures in the Gavet-Vanderbilt-Ringling Collection*. (Pittsburgh: Gutenberg Periscope Publishing, Ltd., 2009), 10, 177, and 249.
- clii John Foremanand, and Robbe Stimson, *The Vanderbilts and the Gilded Age: Architectural Aspirations, 1879-1901*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 29-30.
- cliii John Foremanand, and Robbe Stimson, *The Vanderbilts and the Gilded Age: Architectural Aspirations, 1879-1901*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 37 & Alva Vanderbilt's dictated but never published memoirs 1917?.
- cliv John Foremanand, and Robbe Stimson, *The Vanderbilts and the Gilded Age: Architectural Aspirations, 1879-1901*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 37.
- clv Robert Stern, *New York 1880: Architecture and Urbanism in the Gilded Age*. (New York: Monacelli, 1999), 592.
- clvi John Foremanand, and Robbe Stimson, *The Vanderbilts and the Gilded Age: Architectural Aspirations, 1879-1901*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 37.
- clvii Ibid., 28-30.
- clviii Ibid., 37.
- clix John Van Pelt Vredenburg Van Pelt. *A Monograph of the William K. Vanderbilt House: Richard Morris Hunt Architect*, (New York: John Vredenburg Van Pelt, 1925), 16.

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clx Ibid., 16.

clxi Ibid., plate XVII.

clxii A chair from William H. Vanderbilt's residence at 459 Fifth Avenue is preserved in the collection of the Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site: National Park, Hyde Park, New York. This chair as well as four chairs (accession No.325, 326, 327, 328) and a matching sofa (accession No. 329) appear to also be from the same commission. The exact placement of the set within the Hyde Park residence when they were acquired by Frederick Vanderbilt is uncertain though it has been speculated that these pieces were originally placed in the main elliptical hall on the first floor. I would I thank Frank Futral, Curator of Decorative Arts at the Roosevelt – Vanderbilt National Historic Sites, and Michele Balos Collection Manager at the Roosevelt – Vanderbilt National Historic Sites, for bringing these pieces to my attention For further information on 459 Fifth Avenue's interiors see: Catherine H. Voorsanger et al., *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age*. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, inc., 1994), 176-178.

clxiii VAMA catalogue file for No. 180 +, Accession No. VAMA-00001, transcript of Palmer report interview with Mararet Louise Van Alen, Louise Vanderbilt's niece, 5/18/48, Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site: National Park, Hyde Park, New York.

clxiv Letter dated Sept. 13, 1897 from Frederick Vanderbilt to McKim, Mead & White, Stanford White Papers, Avery. Letter also reproduced and discussed in Wayne Craven, *Stanford White: Decorator in Opulence and Dealer in Antiquities*. (New York: Columba University Press, 2005), 33-36.

clxv For further information on Stanford White's purchases for Frederick Vanderbilt, items with the Medici coat of arms on them, including a tapestry once owned by the Medici and a reproduction cast plaster mantel with the Medici coat of arms see: Wayne Craven, *Stanford White: Decorator in Opulence and Dealer in Antiquities*. (New York: Columba University Press, 2005), 33-36.

clxvi Michael M. Dwyer, *Great Houses of the Hudson River*. (New York: Charles Davey design LLC production, 2001), 101.

clxvii A cabinet in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (accession no. 31.66ab) is the only piece of furniture to surface that is known to have been worked on by the firm of Herter Brothers. For further discussion of this piece see: Catherine H. Voorsanger et al., *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age*. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, inc., 1994), 86.

clxviii Robert Stern, *New York 1880: Architecture and Urbanism in the Gilded Age*. (New York: Monacelli, 1999), 596.

clxviii Ibid., 595.

clxix Both painting that hung in the dining room at 660 were bequeathed to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1920 by William K. Vanderbilt accession numbers (20.155.3) and (20.155.1) respectively . For further information see: Wayne Craven, *Gilded Mansions*. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2009), 122-24.

clxx John Van Pelt Vredenburg Van Pelt. *A Monograph of the William K. Vanderbilt House: Richard Morris Hunt Architect*, (New York: John Vredenburg Van Pelt, 1925), 20.

clxxi Ibid., 16.

clxxii Virginia Brilliant, *Gothic Art in the Gilded Age: Medieval and Renaissance Treasures in the Gavet-Vanderbilt-Ringling Collection*. (Pittsburgh: Gutenberg Periscope Publishing, Ltd., 2009), 24.

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<sup>clxxxiii</sup> Eugene Oudinot was apprenticed as a painter at the Choisy-le-Roi porcelain factory outside of Paris, but he thereafter specialized in stained glass. He made large windows for ecclesiastical and secular installations in his atelier at Passy, just outside Paris. For further discussion on Oudinot's work for 660 see: John Foremanand, and Robbe Stimson, *The Vanderbilts and the Gilded Age: Architectural Aspirations, 1879-1901*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 39. & Virginia Brilliant, *Gothic Art in the Gilded Age: Medieval and Renaissance Treasures in the Gavet-Vanderbilt-Ringling Collection*. (Pittsburgh: Gutenberg Periscope Publishing, Ltd., 2009), 24.

<sup>clxxxiv</sup> Baumgarten had worked for Leon Marcotte prior to being hired by Christian Herter in 1871. For further notes see: John Van Pelt Vredenburg Van Pelt. *A Monograph of the William K. Vanderbilt House: Richard Morris Hunt Architect*, (New York: John Vredenburg Van Pelt, 1925), 17. & Catherine H. Voorsanger et al., *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age*. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, inc., 1994), 229.

<sup>clxxxv</sup> Virginia Brilliant, *Gothic Art in the Gilded Age: Medieval and Renaissance Treasures in the Gavet-Vanderbilt-Ringling Collection*. (Pittsburgh: Gutenberg Periscope Publishing, Ltd., 2009), 24.

<sup>clxxxvi</sup> Jerry E. Patterson, *The Vanderbilts*. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, 1989), 102.

<sup>clxxxvii</sup> *The Hamilton Palace Illustrated Priced Catalogue*. Sale cat. (London: Christie, Manson & Woods Remington and Co. & Librairie de L'Art, June 17-July 20, 1882), 163. & Virginia Brilliant, *Gothic Art in the Gilded Age: Medieval and Renaissance Treasures in the Gavet-Vanderbilt-Ringling Collection*. (Pittsburgh: Gutenberg Periscope Publishing, Ltd., 2009), 24.

<sup>clxxxviii</sup> *The Hamilton Palace Illustrated Priced Catalogue*. Sale cat. (London: Christie, Manson & Woods Remington and Co. & Librairie de L'Art, June 17-July 20, 1882), 163.

<sup>clxxxix</sup> *Ibid.*, 45-46.

<sup>clxxx</sup> Virginia Brilliant, *Gothic Art in the Gilded Age: Medieval and Renaissance Treasures in the Gavet-Vanderbilt-Ringling Collection*. (Pittsburgh: Gutenberg Periscope Publishing, Ltd., 2009), 24.

<sup>clxxxvi</sup> The salon ceiling painting was by French painter Paul Baudry (1828-1886) and is reputed to have been given by William K. Vanderbilt to the new Century Theatre when it was being built. For further discussion of the salon ceiling mural see: Stern, Robert. *New York 1880: Architecture and Urbanism in the Gilded Age*. New York: Monacelli, 1999, 595. & John Van Pelt Vredenburg Van Pelt. *A Monograph of the William K. Vanderbilt House: Richard Morris Hunt Architect*, (New York: John Vredenburg Van Pelt, 1925), 17.

<sup>clxxxvii</sup> "Mrs. W. K. Vanderbilt's Great Fancy Dress Ball" 3-26-1883, *New York Times* March 27, 1883.

<sup>clxxxviii</sup> *The Wildenstein Collection: The Compendium*. Sale cat. (London Dec. 14-15 Christies, 2005), lots 161-3, 100.

<sup>clxxxiv</sup> Virginia Brilliant, *Gothic Art in the Gilded Age: Medieval and Renaissance Treasures in the Gavet-Vanderbilt-Ringling Collection*. (Pittsburgh: Gutenberg Periscope Publishing, Ltd., 2009), 24.

<sup>clxxxv</sup> Thomas Gannon, *Newport Mansions: The Gilded Age*. (Little Compton: Fort Church Publishers, Inc., 1996), 68.

<sup>clxxxvi</sup> Émile Gavet, a wealthy French industrialist of the 19th century, amassed one of the most noted collection of Renaissance furniture, watches, jewelry, glass, della robbias and twenty five paintings in its day. The collection was later purchased by Alva Vanderbilt, but upon her divorce from William K.

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Vanderbilt in 1895 she offered the collection for sale. The collection in its entirety was purchased by John Ringling and is now part of the permanent collection at the Ringling Museum, Sarasota Florida. Two paintings from this collection were stolen from the Museum in the early 1950s. One of which was a Bruegel. For further information on the Gavet Collection see: Virginia Brilliant, *Gothic Art in the Gilded Age: Medieval and Renaissance Treasures in the Gavet-Vanderbilt-Ringling Collection*. (Pittsburgh: Gutenberg Periscope Publishing, Ltd., 2009), 14.

<sup>clxxxvii</sup> John Foremanand, and Robbe Stimson, *The Vanderbilts and the Gilded Age: Architectural Aspirations, 1879-1901*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 23-24.

<sup>clxxxviii</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>clxxxix</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>cx</sup> Robert Stern, *New York 1880: Architecture and Urbanism in the Gilded Age*. (New York: Monacelli, 1999), 596.

<sup>cx</sup> *Ibid.*, 595.

<sup>cxci</sup> "Mrs. W. K. Vanderbilt's Great Fancy Dress Ball," *The New York Times*; March 26, 1883 & clipping, *The New York Times*; March 27, 1883.

<sup>cxcii</sup> John Foremanand, and Robbe Stimson, *The Vanderbilts and the Gilded Age: Architectural Aspirations, 1879-1901*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 24.

<sup>cxci</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>cxci</sup> Robert Stern, *New York 1880: Architecture and Urbanism in the Gilded Age*. (New York: Monacelli, 1999), 596.

<sup>cxci</sup> *Ibid.*, 593.

<sup>cxci</sup> Jerry E. Patterson, *The Vanderbilts*. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, 1989), 123.

<sup>cxci</sup> Robert Stern, *New York 1880: Architecture and Urbanism in the Gilded Age*. (New York: Monacelli, 1999), 593.

<sup>cxci</sup> Catherine H. Voorsanger et al., *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age*. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, inc., 1994), 87.

<sup>cxci</sup> J. Pierpont Morgan's great great great great grandfather, Miles Morgan (161-1699) immigrated from England and settled in the Connecticut Valley in 1636. For further discussion on J. Pierpont Morgan's family lineage see: Linda H. Roth, *J. Pierpont Morgan, Collector: European Decorative Arts from the Wadsworth Athenaeum*. (Wisbech, England: Balding + Mansell Ltd, 1987), 10.

<sup>cc</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>cci</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>ccii</sup> Jean Strouse, "J. Pierpont Morgan: Financier and Collector," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* Vol. LVII, No. 3, Winter (2000): 6.

<sup>ccii</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

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<sup>cciv</sup> Linda H. Roth, *J. Pierpont Morgan, Collector: European Decorative Arts from the Wadsworth Athenaeum*. (Wisbech, England: Balding + Mansell Ltd, 1987), 12-13.

<sup>ccv</sup> Jean Strouse, "J. Pierpont Morgan: Financier and Collector," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* Vol. LVII, No. 3, Winter (2000): 7.

<sup>ccvi</sup> When J. Pierpont Morgan died in 1913 the *New York Times* reported that his estate was filed for \$78,149,024, a fortune that was far less than that of his nearest social and business rival, oil industrialist John D. Rockefeller, whose fortune was then approaching a billion dollars. Jean Strouse, "J. Pierpont Morgan: Financier and Collector," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* Vol. LVII, No. 3, Winter (2000): 9.

<sup>ccvii</sup> For probate purposes J. Pierpont Morgan's art collection was valued at \$20 million of the total estate filed for \$78,149,024. Jean Strouse, "J. Pierpont Morgan: Financier and Collector," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* Vol. LVII, No. 3, Winter (2000): 9, 57.

<sup>ccviii</sup> Jean Strouse, "J. Pierpont Morgan: Financier and Collector," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* Vol. LVII, No. 3, Winter (2000): 4. & Arnold Lewis et al., *The Opulent Interiors of the Gilded Age: All 203 Photographs from "Artistic Houses."* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1987), 144. & "MORGAN HOME TO BE SOLD.; Dover House, Near London, with Its 140 Acres, In the Market," *The New York Times*; Jan. 5, 1914.

<sup>ccix</sup> Jean Strouse, "J. Pierpont Morgan: Financier and Collector," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* Vol. LVII, No. 3, Winter (2000): 33.

<sup>ccx</sup> Art critique Earl Shinn used the same pseudonym of Edward Strahan as the author of *Treasures of America* when he wrote *Mr. Vanderbilt's House and Collection*. Both published by George Barrie.

<sup>ccxi</sup> *Near Damascus* by Frederic E. Church (1826-1900) hung in the dining room at Thirty-sixth Street and Madison Avenue. For further discussion on the Morgan dining room see: Arnold Lewis et al., *The Opulent Interiors of the Gilded Age: All 203 Photographs from "Artistic Houses."* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1987),

<sup>ccxii</sup> *Ibid.*, 144.

<sup>ccxiii</sup> Jean Strouse, "J. Pierpont Morgan: Financier and Collector," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* Vol. LVII, No. 3, Winter (2000): 22.

<sup>ccxiv</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>ccxv</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>ccxvi</sup> *Ibid.*, 4-5.

<sup>ccxvii</sup> *New York Times*, January 27, 1914.

<sup>ccxviii</sup> Apart from Morgan's collection of rare books and manuscripts and drawings retained by the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, the majority of the rest of his collection is now dispersed. The majority of these items being held in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Frick Collection in New York, and the Wadsworth Athenaeum, Hartford Connecticut. For further information on the dispersal of J. Pierpont Morgan's collection see: Jean Strouse, "J. Pierpont Morgan: Financier and Collector," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* Vol. LVII, No. 3, Winter (2000): 4.

<sup>ccxix</sup> J. Pierpont Morgan's first wife was Amelia Sturges (called "Memie"), the daughter of a prominent New York merchant and patron of the arts, Johnathan Sturges. Sadly in February of 1862 she

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died from tuberculosis only four months after their wedding. Morgan was 24. For more information on Amelia Sturges see: Jean Strouse, "J. Pierpont Morgan: Financier and Collector," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* Vol. LVII, No. 3, Winter (2000): 11-3.

<sup>ccxx</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>ccxxi</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>ccxxii</sup> The Morgan's new residence was located on the Northeast corner of Thirty-sixth St. and Madison Avenue and was originally constructed between 1853 and 1856. For a further discussion see: Arnold Lewis et al., *The Opulent Interiors of the Gilded Age: All 203 Photographs from "Artistic Houses."* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1987), 144.

<sup>ccxxiii</sup> *Ibid.*, 144.

<sup>ccxxiv</sup> In 1862 Pierpont purchased some furniture for his library from Gustav Herter and based on photographic evidence comparing those items in his drawing-room at his residence at East 40<sup>th</sup> Street he purchased further items from the firm sometime in the 1870's. These purchases however were far more modest compared to what the Morgan's were about to commission. For an critique of the Morgan's purchases from Herter Brothers from 1862 to 1883 see: Catherine H. Voorsanger et al., *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age.* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, inc., 1994), 84-5.

<sup>ccxxv</sup> Arnold Lewis et al., *The Opulent Interiors of the Gilded Age: All 203 Photographs from "Artistic Houses."* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1987), 144.

<sup>ccxxvi</sup> Diaries of Frances Tracy Morgan, Nov. 14, 1881, Achieves, the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York. Mrs. Morgan "spent the morning at Herter's over stuffs." The following day she took her daughters with her to Herter showroom and two days after that she indicated that she "spent most of the day with P[ierpont], Sarah[presumably J. Pierpont Morgan's sister] and Mr. Herter over carpets." On Nov. 22, 1881 she recorded "finish[ing] work on papers and carpets with Mr. Herter at Sloane's." (Established New York store W. & J. Sloane. For further details see: Catherine H. Voorsanger et al., *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age.* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, inc., 1994), 85-7.

<sup>ccxxvii</sup> Catherine H. Voorsanger et al., *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age.* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, inc., 1994), 87.

<sup>ccxxviii</sup> *Ibid.*, 86-7.

<sup>ccxxix</sup> The structural renovations of the Morgan house involved moving the entrance from Madison Avenue to East Thirty-sixth Street, which involved moving the main staircase and reconfiguring the original entrance hall, dining room, and parlor into the new drawing-room.

<sup>ccxxx</sup> Arnold Lewis et al., *The Opulent Interiors of the Gilded Age: All 203 Photographs from "Artistic Houses."* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1987), 144.

<sup>ccxxx</sup> *Ibid.*, 144.

<sup>ccxxxii</sup> Catherine H. Voorsanger et al., *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age.* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, inc., 1994), 88.

<sup>ccxxxiii</sup> Arnold Lewis et al., *The Opulent Interiors of the Gilded Age: All 203 Photographs from "Artistic Houses."* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1987), V.

<sup>ccxxxiv</sup> Catherine H. Voorsanger et al., *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age.* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, inc., 1994), 88.

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<sup>ccxxxv</sup> George Sheldon, *Artistic Houses: being a series of Interior Views of the most Beautiful and Celebrated Homes in the United States, with a description of the Art Treasures contained therein.* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1883-84), 76.

<sup>ccxxxvi</sup> *Ibid.*, 76.

<sup>ccxxxvii</sup> *Ibid.*, 76.

<sup>ccxxxviii</sup> *Ibid.*, 76.

<sup>ccxxxix</sup> Arnold Lewis et al., *The Opulent Interiors of the Gilded Age: All 203 Photographs from "Artistic Houses."* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1987), 147.

<sup>ccxi</sup> Illustrated in Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Mr. Vanderbilt's House and Collection.* 4 vols. (Boston, New York, and Philadelphia: George Barrie, 1883-84), 50. (current location unknown)

<sup>ccxii</sup> Related motifs used in the capitals of the Vanderbilt columns by Herter Brothers was virtually repeated in the engaged columns that make up the paneling of the main hall in Ross R. Wianan's Baltimore house designed by Stanford White in 1882. For illustration of the Vanderbilt columns see: Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *Mr. Vanderbilt's House and Collection.* 4 vols. (Boston, New York, and Philadelphia: George Barrie, 1883-84), 53.

<sup>ccxiii</sup> Catherine H. Voorsanger et al., *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age.* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, inc., 1994), 202-3.

<sup>ccxiiii</sup> *Ibid.*, 202-3.

<sup>ccxlv</sup> Catherine H. Voorsanger et al., *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age.* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, inc., 1994), 175-179, 202.

<sup>ccxlv</sup> Diaries of Frances Tracy Morgan, January 24, 1882, Achieves, the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York. For further discussion on Mrs. Morgan's involvement with Herter Brothers and the Morgan interiors see: Catherine H. Voorsanger et al., *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age.* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, inc., 1994), 87.

<sup>ccxlvi</sup> Jonathan Meyer, *Great Exhibitions: London – New York – Paris Philadelphia 1851-1900* (China: Antiques Collectors' Club, Ltd., Woodbridge, Suffolk, England, 2006), 100.

<sup>ccxlvii</sup> A large bronze version of Primaporta Augustus attributable to the Barbedienne Foundry can be seen in the refectory of the mirror above the sideboard of the Morgans' dining room illustrated in George Sheldon, *Artistic Houses: being a series of Interior Views of the most Beautiful and Celebrated Homes in the United States, with a description of the Art Treasures contained therein.* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1883-84), 75-80 plate.

<sup>ccxlviii</sup> Charles Morgan's relationship to J. Pierpont Morgan as a distant cousin is not conclusive; though probable since both came from families from the area no evidence directly linking their families has been found.

<sup>ccxlix</sup> New York dealers Samuel P. Avery, Cottier and Company, M. Knoedler, William Schaus, and Reichard and Company were all conveniently located within walking distance on Fifth Avenue from Mary Jane Morgan's residence. For further discussion of Mary Jane Morgan's residence and her art collection see: William R. Johnston, *William and Henry Walters, the Reticent Collectors.* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 95.

<sup>cccl</sup> Endnote: Lot 1351, a "bric-a-brac case, doubled plate glass, with gold gilt bronze mountings, as movable shelf. Outside measurements height 28 inches, width 28 inches, depth 17 inches, made to order by Messrs. Herter Brothers. & Lot 1352 table for the above, our prayers wood, with gold gilt



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mountings and ornaments, and shelf the needs, made to order by Messrs. Herter Brothers.” gives some insight into the vitrines owned by Mary Morgan. *The Art Collection Formed by the Late Mrs. Mary J. Morgan*. Sale cat. (New York: American Art Associates, March 3-5, 8, 1886), 196.

<sup>ccli</sup> *Ibid.*, 196.

<sup>cclii</sup> *Ibid.*, 201.

<sup>ccliii</sup> Arnold Lewis et al., *The Opulent Interiors of the Gilded Age: All 203 Photographs from “Artistic Houses.”* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1987), 147.

<sup>ccliv</sup> William H. Vanderbilt had attempted to install eclectic lights in his residence at 640 Fifth Avenue, but they were removed after hot wires caused a fire in the art gallery when they tested the system. For further details see: *The Papers of Thomas A. Edison: Electrifying New York and Abroad*, April 1881-March 1883 (Volume 6) Paul B. Israel (Editor Johns Hopkins University Press 2007page unknown?).

<sup>cclv</sup> Catherine H. Voorsanger et al., *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age*. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, inc., 1994), 87.

<sup>cclvi</sup> Diaries of Frances Tracy Morgan, April 5, 1882, Achieves, the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York. For further discussion on Mrs. Morgan’s involvement with Herter Brothers and the Morgan interiors see: Catherine H. Voorsanger et al., *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age*. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, inc., 1994), 87.

<sup>cclvii</sup> Edison’s assistant, Everitt H. Johnson, was working on the system when hot wires scorched burned Morgan’s library desk and carpet. A fuller account of the incident is recorded in Herbert Satterlee (J. Pierpoint Morgan, 1939). See Arnold Lewis et al., *The Opulent Interiors of the Gilded Age: All 203 Photographs from “Artistic Houses.”* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1987), 144.

<sup>cclviii</sup> *Ibid.*, 145.

<sup>cclix</sup> In 1887 Veblen entered Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland to study philosophy, but left Johns Hopkins to go to Yale University in New Haven Connecticut. See Garrett Powers. “High Society: The Building Height Limitation on Baltimore’s Mt. Vernon Place,” *Maryland Historical Magazine* Vol. 79, No. 3, Fall (1984): 201.

<sup>cclx</sup> Robert Garrett (1783-1857) was born in Lisburn, County Down Ireland and immigrated to America with his family in 1790 and settled in Pennsylvania. See *The Garrett Collection Part I: public auction of Ancient & Foreign Coins by order of The Johns Hopkins University*. Sale cat. (Beverly Hills, Numismatic Fine Arts, Inc. Bank Leu AG, May 16-18, 1984), 12.

<sup>cclxi</sup> *The Garrett Collection Part I: public auction of Ancient & Foreign Coins by order of The Johns Hopkins University*. Sale cat. (Beverly Hills, Numismatic Fine Arts, Inc. Bank Leu AG, May 16-18, 1984), 12.

<sup>cclxii</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>cclxiii</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>cclxiv</sup> Upon John Work Garrett’s death, despite estate ranging from \$5 million to \$30 million, his estate would be valued for probate purposes at \$16,815,592.97. However, due to a long legal battle between Mary Elizabeth Garrett and her brothers that lasted more than two decades the estate’s investments swelled to over \$50 million. See Kathleen W. Sander, *Mary Elizabeth Garrett: Society and Philanthropy in the Gilded Age*. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 110.

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<sup>cclxv</sup> Lili R. Ott, *Evergreen House: The elegant lifestyle of Old Baltimore*. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 1.

<sup>cclxvi</sup> *The Garrett Collection Part I: public auction of Ancient & Foreign Coins by order of The Johns Hopkins University*. Sale cat. (Beverly Hills, Numismatic Fine Arts, Inc. Bank Leu AG, May 16-18, 1984), 14.

<sup>cclxvii</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>cclxviii</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>cclxix</sup> Letter dated Feb. 10<sup>th</sup>, 1884 from Philadelphia publisher, George Barrie, congratulating T. Harrison Garrett with thanks for placing his order for a set of *Mr. Vanderbilt's House and Collections* (89/1000) prior to publication. See Department of Special Collections, Johns Hopkins University box "VIC: THG Print Collection," & T. Harrison's full set of *Artistic Houses* (348/500) with his bookplate preserved at Evergreen House and Library, Baltimore, Maryland.

<sup>cclxx</sup> Lili R. Ott, *Evergreen House: The elegant lifestyle of Old Baltimore*. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 2.

<sup>cclxxi</sup> *The Garrett Collection Part I: public auction of Ancient & Foreign Coins by order of The Johns Hopkins University*. Sale cat. (Beverly Hills, Numismatic Fine Arts, Inc. Bank Leu AG, May 16-18, 1984), 16.

<sup>cclxxii</sup> Location of T. Harrison's print collection established based on the insurance list/levels dated April 3, 1888 from the office of William Montague, Baltimore to T. Harrison Garrett. See Department of Special Collections, Johns Hopkins University box "VIC: THG Print Collection."

<sup>cclxxiii</sup> Quote for materials dated Aug. 19, 1885 from Wm. Ferguson & Bro. Carpenters and Builders, Nos. 401/2 and 421/2 Clay Street, Baltimore to L. Careon concerning the cost of material for the proposed art gallery of T. Harrison Garrett that was not constructed. See Department of Special Collections, Johns Hopkins University box "VIC: THG Interior and garden renovations: Folder 15, 1885."

<sup>cclxxiv</sup> From 1864 through 1870 the precursors to P. Hanson Hiss & Co., 'Hiss Bros.,' are listed in the city directories; then from 1871 through 1887 'P. Hanson Hiss & Co.'. Beginning in 1888 it was listed as 'The P. Hanson Hiss Manufacturing Company' until 1897, after which it became 'The Philip Hiss Company'. 'The Philip Hiss Company' continued well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century ??????????. P[hilip] Hanson Hiss' life dates were 1830 through 1918. I would like to thank Francis P. O'Neill, Reference Librarian at the Maryland Historical Society, for searching through the Baltimore city directories for references to P.H. Hiss & Co. in order to determine the dates of the firm.

<sup>cclxxv</sup> Lili R. Ott, *Evergreen House: The elegant lifestyle of Old Baltimore*. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 4.

<sup>cclxxvi</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>cclxxvii</sup> Letter dated Sept. 12' 1884 from Herter Brothers to Mrs. T. H. Garrett & Invoice dated Sept. 12' 1884 from Herter Brothers to Mrs. T. H. Garrett for dining room furniture. (Department of Special Collections, Johns Hopkins University box "VIC: THG Interior and garden renovations 1880's: Folder 17, 1884-1886.") The Herter Brothers dining room in 1927 was demolished for architect Laurence Hall Fowler addition of the "Great Library" to Evergreen for John Work Garret and his wife Alice Warder Garret, completed in 1928 and the "Reading Room," completed in 1932. Paneling from the Herter Brother's dining room, however, was preserved and stored in the stables at Evergreen and are in the collection Evergreen House and Library owned by Johns Hopkins University. See Lili R. Ott, *Evergreen House: The elegant lifestyle of Old Baltimore*. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 13.

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<sup>cclxxviii</sup> *The Garrett Collection Part I: public auction of Ancient & Foreign Coins by order of The Johns Hopkins University*. Sale cat. (Beverly Hills, Numismatic Fine Arts, Inc. Bank Leu AG, May 16-18, 1984), 13.

<sup>cclxxix</sup> Great Exhibitions London- New York- Paris – Philadelphia 1851-1900, by Jonathan Meyer, pp. 233.

<sup>cclxxx</sup> Lili R. Ott, *Evergreen House: The elegant lifestyle of Old Baltimore*. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 3. & Letter (p. 3) dated Sept. 6, 1884 from P. Hanson Hiss & Co. to T. Harrison Garrett and an invoice dated March 20, 1885 from P. Hanson Hiss & Co. to T. Harrison Garrett noting the carved mahogany and oak seat as well as lists several stain glass lights for the hall, and a invoice dated Jan 10, 1885 from P. Hanson Hiss & Co. to T. Harrison Garrett for a \$475 charge for “Moving furniture at house several times.” (Department of Special Collections, Johns Hopkins University box VIC: THG Interior and garden renovations 1880’s: EH, Miss. Bills 1885-89)

<sup>cclxxx</sup> Estimate dated Sept. 17, 1884 from P. Hanson Hiss & Co. to T. Harrison Garrett concerning first floor hallway renovations for: “Mantel Antique Green Oak; Woodwork (\$1.200; Marble Work (Rose Pink) 750.00; ...Iron Back, Fire Brick Jambe, Labor \$40.00...Antique Oak Seat Tapestry Frame and Cedar Lining (No Cushions) \$480.00.” (Department of Special Collections, Johns Hopkins University box VIC: THG Interior and garden renovations 1880’s: EH, Miss. Bills 1885-89)

<sup>cclxxxii</sup> Letter (p. 3) dated Sept. 6, 1884 from P. Hanson Hiss & Co. to T. Harrison Garrett. (Department of Special Collections, Johns Hopkins University box VIC: THG Interior and garden renovations 1880’s: EH, Miss. Bills 1885-89)

<sup>cclxxxiii</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>cclxxxiv</sup> Letter dated Sept. 6, 1884 from P. Hanson Hiss & Co. to T. Harrison Garrett: Thomas Harrison Garrett. (Department of Special Collections, Johns Hopkins University box VIC: THG Interior and garden renovations 1880’s: EH, Miss. Bills 1885-89)

<sup>cclxxxv</sup> Katharine B. Dehler, *Our Heritage: 11 West Mount Vernon Place*. (Baltimore: Jay-Bee Press, 1993), 9-10.

<sup>cclxxxvi</sup> Sona K. Johnston, *American Paintings 1750-1900: from the Collection of The Baltimore Museum of Art*. (Baltimore: Schneidereith and Sons, 1983), 108, 114-115.

<sup>cclxxxvii</sup> John Work Garrett’s house, No. 101 W. Monument Street, was inherited by Robert Garrett’s sister, Mary Elizabeth Garrett. She expanded the house and hired Lockwood de Forest and Louis Comfort Tiffany to redecorate it in 1886. After her death in 1917 the house passed to her companion who rented it in 1924 to the Baltimore Museum of Art. The house was razed in 1929 to make way for Wyndham Baltimore Peabody Court Hotel at 612 Cathedral St, Baltimore. See Roberta A. Mayer, *Lockwood de Forest: Furnishing the Gilded Age with a Passion for India*. (Cranbury: Associated University Presses, 2008), 142-154, 186-7. & Garrett Powers. “*High Society: The Building Height Limitation on Baltimore’s Mt. Vernon Place*,” Maryland Historical Magazine Vol. 79, No. 3, Fall (1984): 201.

<sup>cclxxxviii</sup> “THE LAST OF THE SEASON,” *New York Times (1857-Current file)*; Feb. 7, 1882; ProQuest Historical Newspapers *The New York Times (1851-2005)*, accessed, Oct. 10, 2008.

<sup>cclxxxix</sup> Franck Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper, New York, December 10, 1885; “The Death of the Late William H. Vanderbilt...”

<sup>ccxc</sup> While the firm of McKim, Mead & White was becoming nationally known the Garretts’ decision to engage the firm may have been facilitated by the fact that the firm only the year before had completed

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the palatial Baltimore residence of Ross Revillon Winans (1847-1912) at 1217 Saint Paul Street. See Garrett Powers. "High Society: The Building Height Limitation on Baltimore's Mt. Vernon Place," Maryland Historical Magazine Vol. 79, No. 3, Fall (1984): 202.

<sup>ccxc</sup>i *ibid.*, 202.

<sup>ccxc</sup>ii "PRESIDENT GARRETT'S BAY WINDOW," *New York Times (1857-Current file)*; Apr. 10, 1886; ProQuest Historical Newspapers *The New York Times (1851-2005)*, accessed, Oct. 10, 2008.

<sup>ccxc</sup>iii Garrett Powers. "High Society: The Building Height Limitation on Baltimore's Mt. Vernon Place," Maryland Historical Magazine Vol. 79, No. 3, Fall (1984): 202.

<sup>ccxc</sup>iv Receipt dated Dec. 9<sup>th</sup> 1886 from Herter Brothers to Messrs McKim, Mead & White: for \$300 for "1 Antique Tapestry for Dining room" & Receipt dated Nov. 17, 1886 from Herter Brothers to Messrs McKim, Mead & White: for \$55 for embroidered textiles. (Maryland Historical Society Special Collections, Baltimore; Garrett Papers: MS970, box 16: "General Correspondence, No. 11 Mt. Vernon Place. 1883-1893; No Date.")

<sup>ccxc</sup>v Invoice dated Dec. 12, 1885 from McKim Mead & White Office listing furniture ordered: "...for Mr. Garrett..Mrs. Garrett's bedroom, "Painted In White" 1 double bedstead; 1 wire spring; 1 Breuer; 1 washstand; 1 table;... 1 light Chair; 2 " " [matching light chairs]; 1 Easy "Chair" in red velvet." (Maryland Historical Society Special Collections, Baltimore; Garrett Papers: MS970, box 16: "General Correspondence, No. 11 Mt. Vernon Place.1883-1893; No Date.")

<sup>ccxc</sup>vi Letter dated June 30, 1885. (Maryland Historical Society Special Collections, Baltimore; Garrett Papers: MS979, box 16: "General Correspondence, No. 11 Mt. Vernon Place.1883-1884.") & Invoice dated Dec. 17, 1886 for main hall paneling for \$770.00. (Maryland Historical Society Special Collections, Baltimore; Garrett Papers: MS979, box 16: "General Correspondence, No. 11 Mt. Vernon Place.1883-1893; No Date.")

<sup>ccxc</sup>vii Real Estate and Furnishings & Art Property 7, 9, 11 and 13 West Mr. Vernon Place, Baltimore, Maryland; Estates of the late Dr. and Mrs. Henry Barton Jacobs. Sale cat. (Baltimore: Sam. W. Pattison & Co. Auctioneers in Collaboration with Parke-Bernet Galleries, Inc., New York, December 10-12, 1940), 138-141.

<sup>ccxc</sup>viii Letter dated Nov. 27, 1885 from John Stack & Sons, Baltimore to McKim, Mead & White agreeing to "furnish Leaded window Glass to designs for third Story front, for Mr. Robert Garrett's House." (Maryland Historical Society Special Collections, Baltimore; Garrett Papers: MS979, box 16: "General Correspondence, No. 11 Mt. Vernon Place.1883-1893; No Date.")

<sup>ccxc</sup>ix Letter dated Dec. 7<sup>th</sup>, 1886 from The Tiffany Glass & Decorating Co. to Mess. McKim, Mead & White that accompanied a "bill for alterations in Mr. Robert Garrett's window "The Standard Bearer" (Maryland Historical Society Special Collections, Baltimore; Garrett Papers: MS979, box 16: "General Correspondence, No. 11 Mt. Vernon Place.1883-1893; No Date.")

<sup>ccc</sup> Letter dated August 20, 1886. (Maryland Historical Society Special Collections, Baltimore; Garrett Papers: MS979, box 11: "A.B. Crane, Correspondence to, 1884-1888.")

<sup>ccci</sup> Real Estate and Furnishings & Art Property 7, 9, 11 and 13 West Mr. Vernon Place, Baltimore, Maryland; Estates of the late Dr. and Mrs. Henry Barton Jacobs. Sale cat. (Baltimore: Sam. W. Pattison & Co. Auctioneers in Collaboration with Parke-Bernet Galleries, Inc., New York, December 10-12, 1940), 138-141), 150.

<sup>ccci</sup>ii Letter dated Feb. 24, 1885 from P. Hanson Hiss & Co. to McKim, Mead & White & transcription of a letter dated June 3, 1886 from A.B. Crane to Mess. McKim, Mead & White (Maryland

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Historical Society Special Collections, Baltimore; Garrett Papers: MS979, box 11: "A.B. Crane, Correspondence to, 1884-1888.")

<sup>ccciii</sup> Dr. Henry B. Jacobs, *The Collection of Mary Frick Jacobs*. (Baltimore: privately printed, 1938), n/a.

<sup>ccciv</sup> Real Estate and Furnishings & Art Property 7, 9, 11 and 13 West Mr. Vernon Place, Baltimore, Maryland; Estates of the late Dr. and Mrs. Henry Barton Jacobs. Sale cat. (Baltimore: Sam. W. Pattison & Co. Auctioneers in Collaboration with Parke-Bernet Galleries, Inc., New York, December 10-12, 1940), (lot 1106) 136. & Dr. Henry B. Jacobs, *The Collection of Mary Frick Jacobs*. (Baltimore: privately printed, 1938), n/a.

<sup>cccv</sup> "Robert Garrett's Palace: Formally Opened with a Brilliant Ball," *New York Times (1857-Current file)*; Jan. 12, 1887; ProQuest Historical Newspapers *The New York Times (1851-2005)*, accessed, Oct. 10, 2008.

<sup>cccvi</sup> Contract dated Feb. 20, 1885 with McKim, Mead & White at a cost of \$3,400. (Maryland Historical Society Special Collections, Baltimore; Garrett Papers: MS979, box 16: "General Correspondence, No. 11 Mt. Vernon Place.1883-1893; No Date.")

<sup>cccvii</sup> Letter dated Dec. 31, 1885 regarding the cost of installing the windows, priced at \$8.00 per square foot. (Maryland Historical Society Special Collections, Baltimore; Garrett Papers: MS979, box 16: "General Correspondence, No. 11 Mt. Vernon Place.1883-1893; No Date.")

<sup>cccviii</sup> "Robert Garrett's Palace: Formally Opened with a Brilliant Ball," *New York Times (1857-Current file)*; Jan. 12, 1887; ProQuest Historical Newspapers *The New York Times (1851-2005)*, accessed, Oct. 10, 2008.

<sup>cccix</sup> Letter dated Dec. 31, 1885 from Hugh Sisson & Sons, Importers, Dealers and Manufactures of Marble and Statuary, 140 W. Baltimore St. to Messrs. McKim, Mead & White: letter regarding the installation of the Onyx fountain (Maryland Historical Society Special Collections, Baltimore; Garrett Papers: MS979, box 16: "General Correspondence, No. 11 Mt. Vernon Place.1883-1893; No Date.") & "Robert Garrett's Palace: Formally Opened with a Brilliant Ball," *New York Times (1857-Current file)*; Jan. 12, 1887; ProQuest Historical Newspapers *The New York Times (1851-2005)*, accessed, Oct. 10, 2008.

<sup>cccix</sup> Letter dated Dec. 21, 1885 from Hugh Sisson & Sons, Importers, Dealers and Manufactures of Marble and Statuary, 140 W. Baltimore St. to Messrs McKim, Mead & White offering: "(4) four Lion Heads of Onyx, for the sum of \$120" that were intended for Wm. H. V. [William H. Vanderbilt]. (Maryland Historical Society Special Collections, Baltimore; Garrett Papers: MS979, box 16: "General Correspondence, No. 11 Mt. Vernon Place.1883-1893; No Date.")

<sup>cccxi</sup> Letter (date n/a) from Thomas Edison to Mary Frick Garrett concerning electrifying No. 11 West Mt. Vernon Place. (Maryland Historical Society Special Collections, Baltimore; Garrett Papers: MS979, box 16: "General Correspondence, No. 11 Mt. Vernon Place.1883-1893; No Date.")

<sup>cccxi</sup> Invoice dated 1889 for installing electric lights in the art gallery of No. 11 West Mt. Vernon Place. (Maryland Historical Society Special Collections, Baltimore; Garrett Papers: MS979, box 12: "A.B. Crane, Correspondence to, 1889.")

<sup>cccxi</sup> Invoice dated May 22, 1886 for the rented "light machines" for house warming party totaling \$919.60. (Maryland Historical Society Special Collections, Baltimore; Garrett Papers: MS979, box 16: "General Correspondence, No. 11 Mt. Vernon Place.1883-1893; No Date.")

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<sup>cccxiv</sup> “Robert Garrett’s Palace: Formally Opened with a Brilliant Ball,” *New York Times (1857-Current file)*; Jan. 12, 1887; ProQuest Historical Newspapers *The New York Times (1851-2005)*, accessed, Oct. 10, 2008.

<sup>cccxv</sup> *Ibid.*, n/a.

<sup>cccxvi</sup> *Ibid.*, n/a

<sup>cccxvii</sup> On April 2, 1902 Mary Frick Garrett and Dr. Henry Barton Jacobs, who had been hired as her husband’s personal physician, were married at Grace and St. Peter’s Church. They entered into an antenuptial contract where their personal property remained separate (her net worth at the time was about \$200 million), she was 51 and he was 43. Upon her second marriage she adopted the name of Mary Frick Jacobs. See Garrett Powers. “*High Society: The Building Height Limitation on Baltimore’s Mt. Vernon Place*,” Maryland Historical Magazine Vol. 79, No. 3, Fall (1984): 205.

<sup>cccxviii</sup> Letter dated March 31, 1884 from Frank B. Porter & Co. (Real Estate Agents and Brokers acted on behalf of the Garretts in Newport, RI) recommending a summer ‘cottage’ for let. (Maryland Historical Society Special Collections, Baltimore; Garrett Papers: MS979, A.B. Crane, Correspondence to, 1884-1888.”)

<sup>cccxiix</sup> Michael Kathrens, *Newport Villas: The Revival Styles 1885-1935*. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2009), 199-205.

<sup>cccxx</sup> Herbert Croly. “*A New Use of Old Forms: Two Houses by Mr. John Russell Pope*,” Architectural Record Vol. 17 No. 4, April (1905): 292.

<sup>cccxxi</sup> Ormolu mounted and veneered writing table or bureau plat by Jean-Henri Reisener (1734-1806) from circa 1785, bequeathed by Mary Frick Jacobs to the Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA1938.275). Though the date and mode of acquisition of this table by Mrs. Jacobs is uncertain it is likely that it was acquired close in date to the construction of Whiteholme in Newport, RI. The lack of any photographic evidence of the table at her home in Baltimore, No. 11 West Mt. Vernon Place, further suggests that the table was in Newport. I would like to thank James Archer Abbott, who served as the Curator of Decorative Arts at the BMA from 1997-2004, for bringing this piece to my attention.

<sup>cccxxii</sup> Robert Garrett after a finical panic shook the investment firm of Robert Garret and Sons his doctor’s advised Mary Frick to take him on an extended trip abroad to help calm his nerves. On their return home in 1887 Robert suffered a nervous breakdown upon hearing that his brother, T. Harrison, had drowned in a boating accident on his yacht, “Gleam,” while they had been away. Eventually his health failed and he died prematurely at the age of 49 in 1896. See Garrett Powers. “*High Society: The Building Height Limitation on Baltimore’s Mt. Vernon Place*,” Maryland Historical Magazine Vol. 79, No. 3, Fall (1984): 202.

<sup>cccxxiii</sup> Jean Strouse, “*J. Pierpont Morgan: Financier and Collector*,” The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin Vol. LVII, No. 3, Winter (2000): 33.

<sup>cccxxiv</sup> “Great Frauds Confessed: Smuggling Goods Sold To Wealthy New-Yorkers,” *New York Times (1857-Current file)*; April 5, 1889; ProQuest Historical Newspapers *The New York Times (1851-2005)*, accessed, Nov. 29, 2010.

<sup>cccxxv</sup> *Ibid.*, n/a.

<sup>cccxxvi</sup> *Ibid.*, n/a.

<sup>cccxxvii</sup> *Ibid.*, n/a.

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<sup>cccxviii</sup> Ibid., n/a.

<sup>cccxix</sup> Ibid., n/a.

<sup>cccx</sup>“IN AND ABOUT THE CITY: THE SMUGGLING CASE,” *New York Times* (1857-Current file); April 6, 1889; ProQuest Historical Newspapers *The New York Times* (1851-2005), accessed, Nov. 29, 2010. & “Great Frauds Confessed: Smuggling Goods Sold To Wealthy New-Yorkers,” *New York Times* (1857-Current file); April 5, 1889; ProQuest Historical Newspapers *The New York Times* (1851-2005), accessed, Nov. 29, 2010.

<sup>cccxix</sup> “*Newspaper clipping*,” probably Baltimore Sun, 1938 or 1940, James and Eddie Garrett Family Archive.

<sup>cccxvii</sup> Doreen B. Burke et al., *In Pursuit of Beauty: Americans and the Aesthetic Movement* (New York: Doreen Bolger Burke, 1986), 120.

<sup>cccxviii</sup> Jonathan Meyer, *Great Exhibitions: London – New York – Paris Philadelphia 1851-1900* (China: Antiques Collectors’ Club, Ltd., Woodbridge, Suffolk, England, 2006), 18.

<sup>cccxviii</sup> Dr. Colin Shrimpton, *Alnwick Castle: Home of the Duke of Northumberland* (Derby: English Life Publications Ltd, 1999), 26.

<sup>cccxv</sup> Ann Benway, *A Guidebook to Newport Mansions: of the Preservation Society of Newport County* (Hong Kong: Fort Church Publishers, Inc., 1984), 29.

<sup>cccxvi</sup> Ann Benway, *A Guidebook to Newport Mansions: of the Preservation Society of Newport County* (Hong Kong: Fort Church Publishers, Inc., 1984), 24-25. & Arnold Lewis et al., *The Opulent Interiors of the Gilded Age: All 203 Photographs from “Artistic Houses.”* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1987), 170.

<sup>cccxvii</sup> Ann Benway, *A Guidebook to Newport Mansions: of the Preservation Society of Newport County* (Hong Kong: Fort Church Publishers, Inc., 1984), 29.

<sup>cccxviii</sup> “The Death of the Late William H. Vanderbilt...,” Franck Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper, New York, December 10, 1885, n/a.

<sup>cccxix</sup> Edith Wharton, and Odgen Codman, *The Decoration of Houses* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1897), Chapter XI, 137 and 139.

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