

THE EMBASSY OF THE 4TH DUKE OF BEDFORD TO PARIS, 1762-1763

By JOAN EVANS

I

John, fourth Duke of Bedford, was a man of fifty-five when in the autumn of 1762 he was appointed Ambassador to the Court of Louis XV in order to negotiate a peace between France and England, who had been at war since 1750. He was, according to Walpole, 'fat, round and merry'; he had succeeded to the Dukedom thirty years before, and lived very happily with his second wife, Gertrude Leveson-Gower. Their principal occupation in the years before his Ambassadorship had been the rebuilding of the greatest of their several houses, Woburn Abbey;¹ the work there was still in progress when he was called to Paris.

It may perhaps be of interest to sketch the material background of the diplomatic mission from the household bills which have survived in the Bedford office and at Woburn Abbey.² There are four bundles of them, all beautifully receipted, docketed and numbered by Percivale Beaumont, the Duke's steward, who accompanied him to Paris. Their numbering is not continuous,³ but Beaumont's cash book shows that most of the other receipts concerned payments made in England. The French bills suffice to give a picture of the household of an Ambassador in Paris in the middle of the 18th century.

The Duke's embassy was first officially offered him on July 22nd, 1762, when he was invited to call upon Lord Bute, the Secretary of State and virtual Prime Minister, who had been secretly negotiating peace with France⁴ through the medium of the Sardinian Ambassador in Paris. Bute discussed with him some of the matters in dispute and told him, as Bedford himself records, 'that the French desire to have the preliminaries signed immediately at London and Paris, by Ambassadors to be sent reciprocally, who are to assume their characters immediately after the signature . . . That the King hoped I should be able to set out by the middle of next month, and that my Family and equipages might follow me'.

In fact what Lord Egremont, also a Secretary of State, called 'the great work of peace', went forward rather more slowly. The Duke had

¹ Gladys Scott Thomson, *Family Background*, 1949, Ch. 1.

² I wish to express my gratitude to His Grace the Duke of Bedford for allowing me to use them; to my friend Miss Gladys Scott Thomson for suggesting that I should undertake the work, and for help on many points of detail; and to Mr. Corbett, the Duke's Chief Agent, for his kindness and courtesy in looking out documents for me to consult.

³ 1098-1133, paid Dec. 2-Dec. 31, 1762; 39-88, Jan. 10-Jan. 31, 1763; 120-153, Feb. 7-Feb. 28, 1763; 328-386, May 11-May 31, 1763;

429-483 (incomplete), June 5-July 6, 1763. A few unnumbered bills are mostly covered by receipts for petty cash. It is noteworthy that only one of them has the engraved billhead fashionable in England; this, the bill of M. Obled 'Aux deux Lions blancs' for china and kitchen ware, is notably simpler in its billhead than are its English contemporaries. All the rest are manuscript throughout on plain paper.

⁴ I have been permitted to consult the twelve volumes of MS. letters concerning the embassy which are at Woburn Abbey.

his own views on the terms to be offered and had many interviews with Bute on the subject. On August 17th the financial terms of his embassy were settled. He received just over 5893 oz. of 'white' silver plate and just over 1066 oz. of silver gilt, together with the regulation portraits of the King and Queen. He was given £1500 for carriages, a grant (the amount is not stated) for the furniture of the Embassy Chapel, but nothing for the furniture of the house. He was to receive £100 a week for 'ordinary entertainment', an extra allowance for house rent when he had to follow the Court, an allowance of £400 quarterly for pens, ink and paper, and £530. 9. 4 for the expenses of his journey.

The invitation to go to Paris came, domestically speaking, at an inconvenient time, for the Duke's only daughter, Lady Caroline Russell, was about to marry the Duke of Marlborough. On August 29th Bedford had to write to Egremont that he could come up from Woburn to kiss the King's hand at the Levee only on the following Wednesday, because the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough were to stay on at Woburn for two days after the wedding. He received a final letter of instructions on September 4th, and reached Dover two days later. The Duchess remained at Woburn;¹ their son, Lord Tavistock, seems to have accompanied his father. The Duke had been allowed to appoint his own Secretary and had chosen Richard Neville Aldworth² who was the Member for Tavistock and had served as his Under Secretary of State in 1748. Aldworth had a Mr. Potenger as assistant, probably the son of John Potenger, the Whig writer. They and the more important members of the Duke's household travelled with him.

The weather on September 6th was so stormy that they could not sail. On the following day they crossed in an English 'yatch' which was to bring back the new French Ambassador, the Duc de Nivernois, on the return voyage.

They did not have a very good crossing. One of the party, Richard Branson, wrote home :³ 'I did not eat the tongue that Mr. Godin was so good as to procure for me, for I was sick at sea. Your cheese I got safe through the barriers. But my Cheshire was shook all to pieces by the pavements'.

The Duke found Nivernois and his Secretary of Embassy Croüy waiting on the quay, and dined with them in Calais on the Monday night, sending back letters to England by them. Captain Boykett and Captain Starr, who had navigated the yacht in which they crossed, received the usual 'gratification' of 240 livres each; the pilot, 480. The *douaniers* at Calais, who naturally allowed the Ambassador's baggage through free, were tipped 144 livres. (The livre then stood at about 23 to the £; the *louis d'or* was worth 30 livres.)

¹ A letter from her daughter (G. Scott Thomson, *The Russells in Bloomsbury, 1669-1771*, 1940, 346) says that she was at Woburn on September 14.

² Almost immediately after his appointment he assumed the name of Neville on succeeding to his maternal uncle's widow's estate.

³ G. Scott Thomson, *ibid.*, 241.

The Duke hired a berline to drive him to Paris at a cost of 216 livres. On the way a battery saluted him at Chauny, a garrison town, and the gunners of the battery were duly tipped in their turn. The Duke wrote to Egremont¹ that the journey had been slow on account of the want of post-horses, and had been made slower by the honours rendered him in the towns he passed through. They left Calais on the 8th and took three days to reach the capital.

The Duke's London household included a Frenchman, Jean François Perrier, who seems to have acted as hairdresser to the ladies of the family.² He acted as courier on the journey, and on the way contrived to lose 10 livres 'and forgot to charge on my late bills'. Once in Paris his accounts lapse entirely into French; his purchase, paid for on October 9th, of a writing desk of black leather, two sticks of sealing-wax and candles, a box of paper and six envelopes, a bottle of ink, three baskets, a *Dictionnaire comique*, four sets of cards for playing quadrille, a subscription to the *Journal des Spectacles*, and a ticket for the tragedy of *Electra*, suggests that he acted as the Duke's secretary on his first arrival. He then disappears from the scene.

The new Ambassador first lodged at the house of the Sardinian Ambassador, Bailli Solar, the Hôtel de Bellisle in the rue de l'Enfer. Immediately on his arrival, on September 11th, he bought from Arnault, a cabinet-maker in the rue de la Monnaie, a veneered rosewood desk, with extensions to draw out at either end; it was probably intended for his own use when working with secretaries. A relatively simple piece of furniture, it only cost 136 livres. The next purchase, a smaller and more elegant writing-table of rosewood with ormolu mounts, perhaps for the duchess's use, was made on October 7th and cost 240 livres. He then bought eight inexpensive writing tables in walnut, each with its inkpot and sand-caster, evidently for the use of the officers of his household; three toilet mirrors, a night table, and that plain walnut chest of drawers with large drawers, which is what any Englishman needs to supplement the elegant furnishings of a foreign bedroom. Meanwhile his English coachman had clearly been complaining, for on September 17th a locksmith had to provide a chest with locks for the stables and put locks on the corn-bins.

Like every English visitor within a week of his arrival in Paris, the Duke discovered that there was something wrong with his hat, and on September 21st bought from André in the rue de Bussy a new beaver with cord and button and cockade.

Immediately on arrival the Duke saw the two Choiseuls: the Duc de Choiseul, who was Minister of Foreign Affairs, and his kinsman the Duc de Choiseul-Praslin, Minister of War and Marine. On the 17th the Duke went to Versailles for his formal introduction to the King.

¹ From Paris, Sept., 12, 1762.

² G. Scott Thomson, *ibid.*, 278.

His men-servants had to be got out of the Bedford orange liveries into the royal scarlet. The footmen were dressed in 'habits de petite livrée' in scarlet and white, with some touches of olive and a good deal of handsome braid; and they had to have a double change of 'surtouts' or overcoats for riding on the back of the coach. New hats had to be got for them, still from André, on September 30th; and for the three coachmen, the four grooms, and the postillion—the last without a brim. The Suisse, Pierre Agassi, had to be dressed to represent his master honourably, with sword mounted in silver and gold and a cane headed and mounted in silver gilt.²

By September 19th the Duke was plunged deep into negotiation with the two Ministers. On one day they talked for nine hours: 'the fullest of business I ever passed in my life or I hope ever shall again'. His task was made more difficult by the want of loyalty in Whitehall; within two days of his arrival Egremont sent instructions contradictory to those the Duke had already received, and relations between the two became and remained strained. Bute on the whole sided with Bedford but failed to restrain his colleague.

By the beginning of October, however, the first stage in the negotiations had been reached. The King and his Court had moved to Fontainebleau to hunt, and the Duke rented the Hôtel de Breteuil at Fontainebleau to lodge in, and hired furniture for its twenty-eight rooms from Belache, a Paris upholsterer. His own room had tapestry-covered walls, green silk curtains, a great bed in green damask, six armchairs and four ordinary chairs to match, and a writing table. With the vans to bring them and take them away, the hire of the furniture cost 1400 livres.

As an Ambassador and a noble of unblemished lineage the Duke had the privilege of riding in the King's coaches and joining in the royal hunt. On September 24th he had purchased in Paris 'un Couteau de chasse garnie d'argent de l'équipage du Roy', from Ravoissie the King's sword-cutler. The Duke took the opportunity of his stay at Fontainebleau to taste a great variety of wines, often supplied in single bottles: Pontac,³ Côte-Rotie, Chambertin, Volnay, Vougeot, Champagne, Frontigneul,⁴ Cap Blanc (presumably Constantia) and sherry (Cheresse), to the tune of 1255 livres.

On October 3rd the first preliminary articles of the treaty of peace were signed at Fontainebleau. The Duke stayed on, in constant negotiation with the Choiseuls, for another three weeks, and when he left his Secretary of Embassy, Richard Aldworth Neville, remained behind to keep in touch with the Ministers. The Duke returned to Fontainebleau on November 2nd and a further instalment of the

¹ From Maillard, draper, a l'Epee Herminee, rue de la Monnaie. The bill came to 3682 livres 15 sols.

² From Ravechat, maître orfèvre.

³ M. Georges Rozet of Macon, a distinguished historian of wine, tells me that Pontac is still

one of the 'cinquièmes crus' of Medoc.

⁴ Frontigneul is unknown even to M. Rozet. No commune of the name exists in France. There is a Frontignat near Montpellier, and a Frontignat-de-l'Isle in Hte. Garonne, either of which might have produced a wine.

preliminaries was signed there on November 3rd. He returned to Paris for a few days to see Lord Tavistock off to England, but by the 10th was back again. He was busy not only with the negotiation of the treaty but also with the acquisition and furnishing of a suitable Embassy in Paris. Towards the end of October he took a house, unfurnished, from the Duc de Chaulnes at 3250 livres a quarter. This was the Hôtel de Grinberghen, 16, rue Saint Dominique. It had been built by Robert de Cotte in 1710 for the Président Duret; then it had been occupied successively by the Duchesse du Lude and the Trésorier Bonnier de la Mosson; and since 1758 it had belonged to the family of Grinberghen, from whom the Duc de Chaulnes rented it.

The house was destroyed when the Boulevard Saint Germain was made¹ in the 19th century, but is known from engravings in Mariette² and Blondel.³ Its architecture was dignified and simple; the stone exterior was only ornamented by rusticated quoins and an armorial pediment. The garden façade was notably simple, with a double row of windows each sixteen in number. It had been modified by Leroux for Bonnier de la Mosson about 1744, and was a very suitable house for an Ambassador, situated in a street almost entirely of great houses *entre cour et jardin*. Its plan shows it fitted into an irregular site, with a slanting *porte-cochère* with a handsome round-headed arch and double carved doors on to the rue Saint Dominique. This led to a large courtyard with a rather cloister-like arcade to the left, through which a passage wide enough for a coach led to another court almost equally large, containing the stables, with two long ranges of stalls with rooms over, and three coach-houses. The kitchen and servants' hall were on the other side of the main courtyard. Originally, as shown on Mariette's plan, the kitchen quarters had their own entrance to the courtyard through a hall, on the other side of which was the service entrance to the main range of rooms. This had lately been replaced⁴ by a window, so that the hall could become a servery for the dining-room, which had been transferred from a room overlooking the stable court, to which food had had to be carried across the court to the old *Grande Salle*.

Symmetrically opposite this original entrance was another, which remained in use, leading to the main range of rooms. The smaller rooms near it on the original plan had been altered to house a fine new staircase.

The main range of apartments, which provided seven communicating rooms, faced on to the garden, with a stepped terrace down to it. The rooms were linked by doors near the windows. Nearest to the hall that adjoined the servants' hall or *salle du commun* came the *Grande Salle*,

¹ The site is now 244 Boulevard St. Germain: see Rochegude & Dumolin, *Guide pratique à travers le vieux Paris*, 490.

² Jean Mariette, *Architecture française*, 1727; Vol. II, plates 179-182 in reprint by L. Haute-
coeur, 1928.

³ J. F. Blondel, *L'architecture française*, Vol. II, 253.

⁴ Blondel, *op. cit.*, II, 253. Presumably a new service entrance was made nearer the street.

now the dining-room; then an antechamber; then the *chambre du dais*; then the *Grand cabinet*, then an antechamber; and behind it, looking on the stable yard, the former dining-room, which seems to have been used by Bedford for the Chancellery.

Alongside the antechamber was a bedroom, with its dressing-room and oratory and two *garderobes* or privies. Three staircases served the upper floor: one from the servants' hall and one, rather grander, but none the less constricted, from behind the bedroom; and the new main staircase. The first floor, which had only lately been made habitable, followed the same general plan as the ground floor, but it is uncertain how many rooms lay behind its sixteen large windows.

The house was clearly not in a very good state; the Duke had his surveyor in on September 27th, and it was the first of many visits. Everything had first to be painted, at a cost of 500 livres. The servants' rooms were then papered; Mr. Dionysius Mellis, the *maître d'hôtel*, had his hung with 'papier peint en colonne Bleu et blanche'; Mr. Beaumont and the housekeeper had wallpaper 'à l'anglaise', and the other servants had paper checked or flowered or scrolled, mostly in red and white.

The Duke had already in 1753 installed porcelain stoves from France to heat the passages and staircases at Woburn, followed by others in 1756,¹ and he had similar stoves put into the French house by Paul Vanglenne of the Quai de la Mégisserie at a cost of 948 livres.

Another innovation at Woburn had been the installation in 1748 of a drainage system complete with four water closets, of which one at least was within the house.² The Duke resolved to make a similar closet for his own use at the Hôtel de Grinberghen. The invention was not unknown in Paris; Dufort de Cheverny had installed 'une garde-robe à l'anglaise' in his house in the rue Notre Dame des Victoires as early as 1760, and the necessary marbles and pipes for such installations had been advertised in the *Annonces* of March 22, 1762.³

None the less, the installation could not be lightly undertaken. The Duke first engaged an architect, Du Mont, to supervise the work. Then a mason, Charvet, rue des Fossés Saint Victor, installed 'Dans une garde-robe . . . une Quvettes à l'anglaise de marbre de Flandres de 3 pieds $\frac{1}{2}$ de long sur 16 pouces de large et 13 pouces d'épaisseur', made an exit hole and laid the floor with octagonal stone tiles. Then Faigueray, master plumber of the rue des Lavandieres Sainte Opportune, put in the cistern and the pipes. His bill is made up in classic plumber-fashion, first with all the materials, and then with the 'demie journée d'un Compagnon et son garçon'. Finally, Loisel, master slater of the rue Traversaine, completed the work in the backyard, and Du Mont certified that it had all been properly carried out.

¹ G. Scott Thomson, *Family Background*, 42.

² *Ibid.*, 32. They are very little later than the earliest recorded at Welbeck Abbey.

³ Havard, *Dictionnaire de l'ameublement, s.v. Anglaise*.

The Duchess came out to join her husband in the middle of November,¹ accompanied by a relative, Miss Wrottesley, always described in the bills as 'Mademoiselle la nièce de Madame la Duchesse'. The Duchess's sister had married the Rev. Richard Wrottesley, Dean of Windsor; they had two daughters,² Elizabeth and Mary, who later married the Duke of Grafton; it remains uncertain which came to Paris. She seems to have been quite young. M. Javillier, dancing master, was engaged to give her lessons soon after her arrival, and M. Bergier, language master, took her on as a pupil at the end of March.

The preliminaries to the treaty were finally ratified at the end of November. This made it possible for the Duke to present his letters of credence to the King at Versailles and to take up his full position as Ambassador.

The Hôtel de Grinberghen was meanwhile being furnished, and the bills show that this was done with great splendour. For the first time for centuries England was approximating to 'the French taste' and the Duke doubtless felt that his purchases would not be wasted. The work was divided between Belache the upholsterer (who had already provided the hired furniture at Fontainebleau) who provided beds, chairs and hangings, and Arnault, who had supplied things for the first house the Duke had occupied. He provided tables, desks, cupboards, chests, and so on. A few pieces of furniture of a cheaper kind, evidently for the servants' use, were also bought in November from Pottemain, Marchand Ebéniste. The fine furniture was all in French style, veneered and inlaid with *bois de rose* and *bois de violet*, and mounted with 'bronze cizelé et doré d'or moulu', or sometimes 'd'or jeune'. The walls of the chief rooms were covered in silk to match the great curtains trimmed with gimp and hanging from pelmets or rods with ornamented ends. The beds for the great people were four-posters with carved ends, rich curtains, and what reads like comfortable bedding. The chairs were all upholstered to match the hangings, except for a few covered in leather or velvet.

The hall was lit by a great globe-shaped hanging lamp, and contained a bookcase nine feet high in marquetry, with its doors hung with taffetas. The antechamber where the footmen waited was lit at night by a gilt bronze lantern with five lights. It had a console table with a marble top, a round table covered in cloth, two folding tables for 'Tri' or Trick, a kind of ombre, two for piquet and two for quadrille, and 'une petite encoignure Julie' veneered in squares. The curtains and covers were of checked green and white silk.

In the *Salle du Dais* the King of England's portrait hung amid crimson draperies. The room had fine ormolu sconces and a chandelier with nine lights in Bohemian cut glass, a grate with a back with Chinese figures

¹ Choiseul had sent her passport from Versailles on September 27.

² Their portraits hang in the Wood Library at Woburn.

and a palm tree in relief, and a great chest five feet long of satinwood inlaid with flowers, with very rich mounts in gilt bronze and a marble top. The usual console table stood between the windows. Arnault proposed to complete the furnishings with a very fine 'serre-papier' filing cabinet with much gilt bronze about it, with a gilt clock to match on the top, costing 2400 livres all told; but the Duke returned it to the shop.

The *Salon doré*, one of the antechambers on Mariette's plan, had silk curtains and velvet furniture, all in green. Its fire-back showed children playing with bunches of grapes; the room was lit from gilt bronze sconces and a crystal chandelier. It had two console tables, one carved with gilt birds with a blue marble top, opposite the windows, and the other with a grey breccia top.

The Duchess's room, presumably the bedroom at the end, was hung in blue and red moiré. Her bed was *à la Turque*, that is, with padded 'boards', not only at the ends, but also along the wall, the whole surmounted by a light and elegant tester from which curtains fell to head and foot. It had a coverlet of white quilted silk and stood on particularly large castors for easy moving. There were six *fauteuils à la reine*, that is, with oval backs, with loose cushions, and two *bergères* to match. It also contained a large bookcase, twin to that in the anteroom. The fire grate had figures of children playing on hunting horns, all of bronze gilt. The room contained a large chest *à l'arcade* in eastern wood with gilt bronze mounts and a marble top, a toilet table in rosewood inlaid with flowers and enriched with plaques of porcelain, a night table, and six hand screens. The shopkeeper also sent 'une jolie table à la Duchesse'¹ inlaid with shaded flowers, mounted in gilt bronze, with castors hidden in the feet and a drawer lined with silk and trimmed with silver braid, but it was returned. The Duchess's dressing room, leading out of the bedroom, was hung in blue and white checked silk. Its grate had a parrot in gilt bronze; the sconces, of the same metal, had twisted branches.

The Chancellery, which seems to have been installed in the old dining-room, was in blue moiré and received no furniture from Arnault; the pair of gilt bronze sconces sent for it were returned. It was probably here that the cheaper office furniture bought from Pottemain was housed.

The room sometimes called the *Salle de Caffé* and sometimes the great antechamber, which must have been the antechamber next the new dining-room, was hung with *turquoise de Tournai*,² with green and red flowers on a white ground. It had the usual marble-topped console between the windows and the usual sconces. The grate was evidently in the new classical taste propagated by Madame de Pompadour: 'un beau feu model neuf a la grec a vase forme antique orne de guirlandes de

¹ Havard, *Dictionnaire de l'ameublement*, s.v. *Table*, notes this as being made in 1778 but does not identify its form.

² *Ibid.*, s.v. *Turquoise*, notes this silk as being made in 1779 but fails to identify it.

laurier de bronze cizelé et doré d'or moulu'. The room was otherwise furnished only with chairs, for the commode sent for it, inlaid with shaded flowers, with a green marble top, was returned.

The great antechamber led to the dining-room, all in yellow silk, with fourteen chairs for the table with a rich double moulding to the frame, four armchairs *en cabriolet* and a screen to match. There was a grate with a fire-back with children playing drums, the usual console between the windows, and a fine mahogany *secrétaire* with a safety lock, with a cupboard below.

The Duke's study in the Grand Cabinet contained eight *fauteuils à la Reine*, a larger armchair for himself, and a stool, probably for his gouty leg, all in crimson Utrecht velvet. No other furniture was bought for it, but the desk and table he had purchased on his arrival were probably placed here.

The main staircase, lit by a glass globe mounted in copper, led to the first floor, which was a good deal less splendid than the *piano nobile*. It is less easy to re-create the rooms, for it was to them that most of the simpler 'effets sans destination' in Arnault's bill seem to have gone. The anteroom of the Secretary of Embassy (from which a passage led to the Chapel) had cotton curtains with thread gimps; his study was in green damask, and his bedroom in green moiré. The 'Chambre de Madame de Mosaille'—was she the Duchess's waiting woman?—was in crimson moiré; another room, apparently the 'Chambre de Mademoiselle' the Duchess's niece, was in moiré in blue and white.

The Chapel had been made out of an ordinary room, of which the mirrors had been taken down. It was furnished with twelve prie-dieu chairs of wood painted red, twenty benches, and five cushions for the communion rail and two for the celebrants, all covered in white brocade with bouquets in red and green. A red silk curtain hung behind the altar. The Minister's bedroom alongside was decently furnished in red cloth.

So we continue down the scale, to the footmen and housemaids who have *lits de baldaquin*, that is, made to be set against the wall, with a long tester over, with hangings of striped cotton—*Sciamoise de Rouen*—trimmed with cotton braid, and rush-seated chairs. Arnault's original total came to 20,001 livres, reduced by discount and the return of a few expensive pieces to 14,110 livres; Belache's total (excluding the hire of furniture at Fontainebleau) was just over 13,000 livres.

The Duke and his guests evidently ate all but dessert off silver. He brought over his own silver from England and probably supplemented the regulation ambassadorial allowance from his own store. Some of it—notably six tureens on stands with spoons, six candlesticks, six covers, and a *surtout de table*, had to be cleaned and repaired after the journey. He bought little from Nolin, his silversmith: four saltcellars with spoons and liners; two wine coolers, and six silver-plated pails. Guillaume Jean, master cutler in the rue de Bussy, supplied two dozen

steel forks and knives, presumably for servants' use, and a dozen each of dessert knives, table knives and forks with green ivory handles, perhaps for the Steward's Room.

No kitchen stuff seems to have been transported to Paris. A great *batterie de cuisine* in copper and iron was bought from Ferret for 2858 livres, and quantities of household crockery from Duffoy's, including a number of plates and dishes *de terre blanche facon d'Angleterre*, and a collection of moulds in the shape of strawberries, peaches, maize and a hare. Quantities of sheets, towels, tablecloths, napkins and cloths of various kinds were bought from a shop kept by a woman with a Dutch name, Theodora Eynhouts.

II

Such a house as the English Embassy at Paris in 1762 demanded a large staff. The Duke of Bedford had spent years nursing his estate back to prosperity after the ravages of his brother's extravagance, and in so doing had established an effective civil service in the offices at Bedford House.¹ The chief officers of the Hôtel de Grinberghen all came thence. At their head was Percivale Beaumont, the London house steward, who was responsible for all the payments and accounts, and in France became 'Monsieur l'Intendant'. In Paris as in London he seems to have lived out. His name suggests that he may have been of Huguenot descent; at all events he spoke and wrote French well, to the great advantage of his master's business in France.

On an almost equal footing with him was Dionysius Mellis,² the clerk of the kitchens at Bedford House, who was responsible for the running of the household. The French bills invariably describe him as *Maitre d'Hôtel*. He lived in and had a French servant—La Forêt—to wait on him. The doctor's bills for attendance on him seem to indicate an elderly man, suffering from rheumatism in his head and neck and sometimes from gout. It was he who was responsible for paying the *etrennes* at Versailles at the New Year of 1763: to valets, footmen and *suisses* at the houses of the Duc de Choiseul, Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Duc de Choiseul-Praslin, Minister of War and Marine, the Contrôleur Général and the Comte de Florentin; to the *suisses* of the Salle des Ambassadeurs and the King's apartments, and to the lackeys of the service by which those desiring audience or presentation were introduced to the King. The *etrennes* were handsome, ranging from 4 *louis d'or* to one.

In a slightly subordinate rank were two men whose particular functions remain uncertain, Thomas Bridgeman and B. Jones; each had his own servant. Were they the butler and the groom of the Chambers from Bedford House?³ A third confidential upper servant was Richard

¹ G. Scott Thomson, *The Russells in Bloomsbury*, 208.

² So always written about, except by the Duke, but he signs Milles.

³ G. Scott Thomson, *Ibid.*, 226.

Branson,¹ who appears in the London household about 1751 as attendant on Lord Tavistock. There was also a woman housekeeper, perhaps Mrs. Farrow, otherwise the 'Mlle. Faron, femme de charge', who is mentioned in one bill; she had Elizabeth Lymington from Woburn to wait on her. A waiting-woman for the Duchess was perhaps the 'Madame de Mosaille' recorded in Belache's bill.²

All these people either lived out or were boarded by the Duke. The rest of the household was on board-wages: 30 sols a day for everyone except for the French menservants who got 35.

The Duke's *suisse*, Pierre Agassi, was responsible for the postage paid on letters received; at the New Year he paid the *etrennes* to the postman of the *Grande Poste* and *Petite Poste* and to the Government letter carrier. He paid for all sorts of small expenses—an office carriage to Versailles; the hire of a sedan chair; alms given to a monk by the Duchess; tips to the Duchesse de Lavallière's concierge and maid, and so on—and was repaid in due course by Mr. Beaumont. He was responsible for seeing that the street before the Embassy was kept clean, and the dung and mud swept up and buried; that straw was laid down for the arrival of a specially distinguished visitor, such as the Portuguese Ambassador, and for the hire and pay of the chimney sweeps. He was early engaged by the Duke and came to London to bring over the carriages.

John Ireland came from Woburn³ to act as Usher of the Steward's Room, and John Key as Usher of the Servants' Hall. The Duke brought four footmen from Woburn. The bills for their travelling expenses survive. Thomas Brown, to judge by his petty cash account, acted as the Duke's valet; the ducal wigs, however, were looked after by a *perruquier*, Le Brun, who even attended him at Versailles.⁴ The duties of Thomas Carter, William Lowe and Henry Klusman cannot be differentiated. To these were added five French footmen, La Fleur, La Jeunesse, Corinni (who all seem to have come from England), Jacques Queban and Jean Pinet; the last travelled to London on January 13th, 1763, and was replaced by Philippe Mayhew. La Fleur—it was probably not his real name; like La Jeunesse, it is one of the classical names for a footman in French comedy—specialized in the washing and mending of silk stockings, and looked after those of both the Duke and the Duchess. He also supervised lamps, candles and links.

The Duke had two English coachmen, John Moss and Conrad Cuneman (the latter had been one of the head coachmen at Bedford House)⁵ and two French, Morrice and Beauvais. He kept two grooms,

¹ His family had long been retainers of the Bedfords; Peter Branson appears as paying the then Duke's bills at Hardwick as early as 1701 (*ibid.*, 118) and John Branson had preceded Percivale Beaumont as house steward at Bedford House, *ibid.*, 224.

² The Duke's list for the carriages to Paris also includes a Mrs. Petit.

³ He was normally at Bedford House, but like other English employees had probably accompanied the Duke to Woburn just before he left for France.

⁴ In November, 1762, the same Le Brun provided a wig for the coachman for 30 livres.

⁵ G. Scott Thomson, *op. cit.*, 233.

Reuben Massey and William Dosell, two postchaise boys, Charles Harris and Edward Hickford; three groom's boys, Thomas Thornicroft, Samuel Smith and John Richardson; two helpers, Levy Gollop and William Jennings, and a postillion, Peter Hodgkin. The French coachmen were doubtless needed because of their knowledge of Paris; otherwise the stables seem to have remained entirely English.

A man with an English name, William Martin, looked after the garden; he lived out and was paid 62 livres 2 sols a quarter. A lot of fruit trees, *en espalier* and *en plein vent*, were bought for the garden, as well as six small oak trees and the usual requirements of wire, hurdles and waxed string. Martin seems, like other jobbing gardeners, to have provided his own tools.

The cleaning staff was hardly less English than that of the stables. Besides Elizabeth Lymington, the housekeeper's maid already mentioned, two housemaids—Sarah Cuthbert and Jane Haswell—and two laundry maids—Sarah Sylvester and Mary Crawford—came from Woburn, as did Elizabeth Carpenter the Plate Maid. In spite of the presence of two laundry maids all the sheets and tablecloths and all the Duchess's washing were sent out; the indiscreet student of the bills may see that she changed her chemise daily, her camisole twice a week and her peignoir once.

The English cleaning staff was supplemented by three French *frotteurs*, Pierre Leymond, La Fontaine and Lessar; and by Guillaume Pallier, wood carrier.

The Duke was accustomed to keep a French cook in London,¹ but does not seem to have brought him to Paris. An Englishman, Isaac Wheeler, heads the list of kitchen employes; the other three, Michael Pousseau, Jean Bertran and Joseph Truseau, are all French. The total number of salaried servants represents a slight increase on the forty commonly employed at Bedford House.²

An English doctor, Richard Gem, looked after the family; he charged 50 *louis d'or* for his attendance during the time they were in Paris. Only 363 livres 6 sols was spent at Depene's the apothecary's; clearly the household enjoyed good health. Jean Coquart, surgeon, charged 242 livres for 'saignées et pensements' for the household, mostly for minor accidents in the stables.

The ordinary household bills, except for a few for such luxuries as biscuits, syrups, ice and fruit, are not included in the surviving bundles;³ they presumably figured in Mr. Mellis's accounts, which have not survived. Wine, however, is recorded; classic growths such as Chambertin, Pommard, Nuits, Graves, still and effervescent Champagne,

¹ *Ibid.*, 226.

² *Ibid.*, 238. The list for the coaches also includes Mrs. Petit, Elizabeth Jordan, Mr. Spencer, Mr. Gattait, and Sarah Smith, who do not appear in the board-wages list.

³ In February, 1763, a barrel of sugar was brought from England; its carriage from Calais to Paris cost 84 livres 6 sols.

Hermitage, Côte-rôtie and Canary. Most of it was bought from Cartier in the rue des Petits Augustins, but in October, 1762, the Duke bought three hogsheads of claret from Morell Disque, and in February, 1763, three hundred bottles of Burgundy from Monsieur le Conseiller Lebault of Dijon.

Relatively small amounts were spent on flowers for the house; Martin the gardener grew eighteen bulbs of Turkey narcissus in glasses for the Duchess's room at a cost of 5 livres 8 sols. Artificial flowers, indeed, were more fashionable for decoration. In December, 1762, she bought from a *fleuriste artificielle*, near the cemetery of the Innocents, twenty-eight branches of artificial flowers and four green trees. In May, 1763—perhaps for a farewell party—more were purchased: four branches of oleander, complete with flowers; four of palm, complete with fruit; four of olive, with fruit; and eight trees of artificial leaves *garnies de fleurs naturelle*.

The Duke went to Versailles for the reception on New Year's Day, 1763, and the Duchess was presented at Court a few days later. She bought (and the Duke paid for) from Ortolan, *couturier*, a 'grand habit de Cour, corset, jupe et bas de robe, robe et jupon' mainly of scarlet velvet. Some beautiful and expensive sleeves, of three frills of *point d'Argentan* on velvet, bought about the same time from another shop, probably completed the dress. A particularly elaborate head-dress from her milliner, Perrot, of *blonde de chenille*, with lappets, sleeveknots and a *colier en esclavage* to match, all trimmed with *fleurs d'Italie* may well have been intended for Versailles.

The Duchess also bought from Ortolan dresses of striped satin; pink and white *gros de Tours*; silk striped in wallflower colour and white, brocaded in bouquets; striped pink and black with bouquets, and a domino of blue taffetas. A second dressmaker was Boulogne, mantua-maker, a 'treasure of a little woman', who could not spell. She produced eighteen dresses in embroidery, satin, taffetas, *velours à la reine* (that is a rich kind of embossed velvet-broché), and batavia (probably a sort of Indian muslin), together with a petticoat and a cape for a total just under 770 livres. She made for Miss Wrottesley two silk dresses and an 'abi de cour de taffetas moirée' for just over 75 livres. The only other purchases recorded by 'Mademoiselle la nièce' and paid for by the Duke, were a hat with a white plume for 30 livres and a length of striped silk, and in May a whole set of caps, collars and cuffs, doubtless to wear in England.

The Duke's clothes were even grander and more expensive than the Duchess's; by February, 1763, his tailor, Le Duc, had been paid 6000 livres on account. He also bought a splendid coat of velvet, with a gold ground and border, and others of black holland velvet, cherry velvet and *fond or nué chenille*, from Le Roux and Delasalle in the rue Saint Honoré. In October he purchased a fine sword *à tropnée*, with a gilt blade and a sheath of white leather.

Some of these splendours, alien from the normal tastes of a man who preferred to dress in English cloth from his West-country estates, were doubtless intended to shine at Versailles. The Duke had to appear there so often, indeed, that he acquired a *pied à terre*, hiring a small house on the Butte de Mont-Bauvon for 400 livres a quarter. He added a new bed, and hired the rest of the furniture. Pierre Leymond, one of the *frotteurs* of the Paris hotel, was installed there as caretaker and cleaner.

The Peace of Paris was signed on February 10th, 1763, and the Duke received many letters of congratulation from the politicians of his party. The state of Europe was none the less extremely unsettled, and the Duke remained very busy, if less pressed than he had been a few months before. Neville was kept travelling backwards and forwards, and was at one time as often in London as in Paris.

On March 30th the Duke asked Egremont for leave to be away from Paris for a short time, leaving Neville in charge during his absence. The Secretary of State replied that he had handed Bedford's letter to the King, who wished to give him leave to return to England, leaving Neville in charge, whenever his private affairs required. The Duke answered on April 7th, expressing his gratitude but saying that he did not wish to go to England before his embassy was ended, which he hoped might be in early summer; he wished rather to make a short tour in the French provinces, perhaps as far as Bordeaux. Finally, however, he went to England in the latter part of April to see the effects of the winter upon his fenland estates, and returned to Paris at the beginning of May by the 'Flanders Road' through St. Omer.¹

In April, 1763, the Duchess went into mourning² and bought a black dress with muslin cuffs, a head-dress in black crape, a black lace mantilla, and a *parure* of black crape: fan, gloves, bag and fichu. By May 11th, however, she was buying taffetas 'en cinq couleurs' for night caps. The Duchess's last splendid court dress from Ortolan was in white, probably for mourning, since black for private mourning could not be worn at court.

On February 9th, 1763, Perrot the milliner delivered to the Duchess 'une poupée habillée en Dame de Cour de France', with everything correct from its silk stockings and fine linen chemise to a most elaborate dress and coiffure. It even had diamond earrings, clasps and buckles and spare pairs of shoes and stockings. The total cost was 383 livres. Such dolls were often paraded in England as models of Paris fashion, and its elegance and elaboration makes it more likely that it was to be

¹ Letter of Richard Branson, May 2, 1763, to Robert Butcher. He reports it 'a prodigious fine Corn Country for many miles, there is such a great appearance of a Plentiful harvest that in my opinion it must lower our Markets in England'. Letter kindly communicated by Miss Gladys Scott Thomson.

² I have not been able to discover for whom. Thomas Lord Trevor, maternal grandfather of the Duke of Marlborough, died on March 22, but the connexion seems rather remote.

sent to the Duchess of Marlborough or the Duchess's London dressmaker than that it was to be played with as a child's toy.

A certain number of purchases were made in Paris which seem to have been intended for England; it is possible, too, that some furniture was bought in Paris and sent direct.

The Duke and Duchess had fallen into the habit when they were in England of collecting oriental china, buying it from the East India Company or through other dealers. Duffoy, the Paris merchant who sold them the ordinary crockery for the house, also provided them with a shallow tea bowl 'd'ancienne porcelaine des Indes Japonnée', two tea-cups of oriental china, a set of six cups 'façon de la Chine', a fair amount of blue and white porcelain, and two bowls 'de porcelaine en couleur des indes brune en dehors et couleur en dedans'.

From the same shop they also purchased a tea-pot and sugar bowl of St. Cloud porcelain, two Chantilly cups, and twelve soup pots of Sèvres. From Bailli in the rue Saint Honoré they bought a dessert set in Sèvres porcelain: eight oval *compotiers*, eight round, eight square; eight shell-shaped dishes; four coolers for liqueurs; and six dozen plates, apparently in three sizes. It seems likely that this may be the set, painted with roses, now shown in the dining-room at Woburn. They also bought Sèvres figures, one of Flora and one of a Tartar, and four others unnamed,¹ all at a cost of just under 2200 livres. From Obled in the rue du Roule they purchased two 'Sultannes de Saxe', a Shepherd, and a Shepherdess of the same fabric, four swans, fourteen figures of sheep and three of dogs, as well as a lacquer tray. Otherwise few purchases of things to take to England are recorded;² exceptionally on November 20th, 1762, the watchmaker Vernaux sold the Duchess two clocks of gilt bronze, one mounted on an elephant and one with a figure of Astronomy.

When the Duke returned from England early in May the court was at Marly, where ambassadors were not received. He saw Choiseul, and explained that he wished to receive his *congé* before long, but etiquette imposed delay. In May he received from the King the classic snuff box with the royal portrait set in diamonds in red enamel; it cost nearly 34,300 livres.³

On May 27th the packing was imminent. A maid went round to Pincot, the trunk-maker in the rue Jacob, and ordered a great trunk 3 ft. 7 ins. long covered in cowhide and lined with linen, with iron corners, and two locks with keys *à l'anglaise*. It was almost certainly for the Duchess's new French clothes. By June 1st all the English servants had gone home, and only the French staff were left on board-wages.

¹ One may have been the group after Falconet, 'Le sabot cassé', still at Woburn.

² They do not seem to have bought any pictures while they were in Paris.

³ *Archives des Affaires Étrangères*, France 2095, fol. II. I owe this reference to the kindness of my friend M. Pierre Verlet. In his will the Duke left 'to my dearest daughter the Duchess of Marlborough my red snuffbox with the French King's picture set round with diamonds'.

The kitchen stuff and household china had been packed and a *batterie de cuisine* and crockery had been hired. At that very moment Monsieur Boileau, the Director of the Sevres factory, arrived to bring a splendid china dessert service of 180 pieces as a present from the King to the Duchess:¹ it is still one of the glories of Woburn. The lapis-blue ground, covered with a vermiculated pattern in gold, frames medallions painted with birds of brilliant hues. It was of royal magnificence and cost 17,294 livres: at the then rate of exchange just over £750.

On June 7th the King at last received the Duke at Versailles and gave him his *congé*. An undated memorandum in the Duke's own hand² shows him occupied with all the details of the journey.

'Kuniman³ with the Roans to set out on Sunday, June 5th, layer and to go to Clermont that night; to go to the Amiens layer (i.e. the relay of horses at Amiens) on Monday.

'John Moss with the bay horses and the English Coach to set out on Monday morning, the 6th, and to reach Amiens on Tuesday night, the 7th.

'From Amiens to Calais is 35 Leagues. The two sets of horses, by aiding each other, will easily perform that journey in the course of Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday morning, by which time they should arrive at Calais, at the time of opening the Gates.

'The Grey Post Chaise horses should set out on Monday morning the 6th June, with Reuben Massey taking with him Tawney and Billy, and proceed by gentle journeys as far as Peronne, 32 Leagues from Paris, and there wait for me.

'The Duchess and I, in the Post Chaise, Lady M. Fitzpatrick, Miss Wrottesley, Mrs. Godin and Agnes in the Post Coach, are to set out from Paris, with post horses, on Wednesday evening the 8th of June, and to reach Senlis, 10 Leagues from Paris, that night.

'To set out in the same manner on Thursday morning the 9th and reach Peronne, 22 Leagues, that night.

'To set out from Peronne on Friday morning with my own horses in the Post Chaise, either from that place, or the next Post to it, Sailly en Arrouaise, the Ladies in the Post Coach with post horses, and to reach that night either Aire (23 Leagues) or St. Omer (26 Leagues).

'To arrive at Calais on Saturday morning time enough to go on board that day'.

The family's final departure may be dated from the fact that no newspapers were delivered after June 12th. The next day Mr. Beaumont paid the modest sum of 50 livres 15 sols for dilapidations, mostly broken

¹ P. Verlet, *Sevres, le XVIIIe siècle*, 1953, I, pp. 48 and 209. The frontispiece represents two pieces of the set in colours. Further illustrations will be found in an article by Geoffrey Wills on 'French and English Porcelain at

Woburn Abbey' in *Apollo* Jan., 1956, 14.

² G. Scott Thomson, *Woburn Abbey, Study*, Vol. XLV, fol. 198.

³ A coachman; see above p. 147.

windows, and on July 6th the last bills for sundries were repaid to the French menservants. The Duke of Bedford's embassy to France was over.

III

It is not easy to determine what was the fate of the contents of the Hôtel de Grinberghen. Mr. Beaumont's surviving receipts include only one for making a packing case for a mirror, and on their evidence it might be supposed that all the furniture had been disposed of in Paris, perhaps to the Duke's successor as Ambassador. Yet the fact that kitchen utensils and domestic crockery and china had to be hired for the last ten days of the family's stay suggests that these were packed and sent to England. Some at least of the French furniture is certainly recorded in later inventories of the Duke's English houses, and some may very probably still be recognized at Woburn to-day.

The hangings on the walls of the Hôtel de Grinberghen do not seem to have been brought to England. The rooms of Woburn Abbey and Bedford House in the main had their walls covered with flock paper, not moiré or brocade. The splendid yellow brocade of the two Yellow Drawing Rooms, built by the Ambassador Duke at Woburn before he left England, was added after his return and reflects French taste, but the silk was bought in England.

The inventory of the houses made after the Duke's death in 1771 records various items that can clearly be identified with those in the Paris bills. The ballroom at Bedford House, for example, contained 'a large French Settee, the Frame richly Carv'd and Gilt with a thick loose Cushion to the seat covr'd with rich Variagated Velvet . . . two Burziers to match and on stool to Do. Eight Cabriolais to match Do. Six smaller Do. partly gilt and six Back Stools, the seats only stuffed, the whole covr'd with Variagated Velvet'. Without question this is the furniture covered with *velour à jardin* from the Salon Doré at Paris.¹

Other suites of furniture are less easily recognised, partly because of the difference in nomenclature between French and English textiles, and partly because some of them may well have been re-covered to fit fresh surroundings. It looks as if the set in 'red and white Tabaray'² in the Duchess's bedchamber and dressing-room at Bedford House—8 cabriolets, 14 back stools, a Bergère, and a large settee—were in part derived from the 6 *fauteuils à la reine*, 2 *bergères en cabriolet*, 6 *fauteuils en cabriolet* and 2 *chaises en cabriolet* of her Paris apartments, and the 'double headed Couch bed . . . with a Doom canopy and a Gotheroon cornice' may represent the *lit à la Turque*.

¹ It formed Lot 87 of the first day of the Bedford House sale by Mr. Christie on May 5, 1800, and five following days.

² Mr. Donald King of the Victoria and Albert Museum tells me that tabaret (a word that had many spellings) was a woollen material used for upholstery.

The various sets of furniture covered in yellow damask—6 walnut¹ 'Backstools' and 2 French elbow chairs in the North-west Turret Room at Woburn, the 6 carved 'Backstools', 2 elbow chairs and a sofa in the yellow drawing room—may derive from the 10 'grands fauteuils', 2 Bergères 'en confessionale' and 12 cabriolet chairs of the *Salle du Dais*. Of the blue damask furniture—two long stools in the State Bedchamber at Woburn, 6 elbow chairs 'the frames richly carv'd and gilt in Burnish'd gold', 2 large sofas to match and 2 'Backstools' in the Blue Drawing Room; 4 elbow chairs and 2 large sofas in the Saloon, and 12 backstools and 2 elbow chairs in the eating room with 6 backstools, and 2 elbow chairs of the same pattern in the small drawing room—represent a problem for which it is not easy to find an equation in the Paris bills, though a roughly equivalent number could easily be found. A further problem is produced by the furniture of the State Bedroom and dressing room: 6 elbow chairs, the frames richly carved and gilt in burnished gold, the backs, seats and elbows covered with Chaillot tapestry, 6 backstools to match, a couch, and 2 long stools, the last covered in blue damask. Chaillot tapestry, a knotted pile fabric analogous with Savonnerie carpets, was made on the Quai de Chaillot throughout the 18th century.² It does not figure anywhere in the bills but, with the description of the carved gilt mounts, strongly suggests a Paris origin for the suite of furniture. The 'French Bedchamber' at Woburn, with 'blue and yellow Belsamine'³ curtain and covers, had 7 walnut elbow chairs that may have helped to give it its name; and the dressing room to the Printed Cotton Bedchamber had an elbow chair covered with cut velvet and 2 gilt bergères and a couch covered in crimson damask that sound as if they might have come from the Duke's cabinet in the Hôtel de Grinberghen. There is still a set of high-backed chairs with richly moulded frames at Woburn that seem to represent the Paris dining room chairs, and a number of sets of chairs (sometimes broken) that appear to be of Parisian origin.⁴

The lighting fittings from Paris were clearly transferred to London: 'a German Lustre with Cutt glass ornamts' in the Duchess's Dressing Room at Bedford House represents the 'gros lustre de bronze à neuf lumières monté en If Garny de Crystal de Bohème taillé' that cost 760 livres for the *Salle du Dais*, and a second with branches for four lights in the Red Drawing Room is that bought for the Salon. A number of rooms both at Bedford House and Woburn were lit from 'rich branches . . . of or moulu' that seem to represent the 'bras . . . de bronze ciselé et

¹ Mr. E. H. Pinto in his article on 'Furniture at Woburn' in *Apollo*, Jan., 1956, 9, notes the amount of carved walnut furniture of about 1760 at Woburn, but tends to identify it as English.

² I am indebted to Mr. Wingfield Digby of the Victoria and Albert Museum for this identification.

³ Mr. Donald King suggests that this is the stuff usually called belsamire, with a floral pattern in silk on a linen ground.

⁴ In my view this explains the unusual preponderance of walnut chairs at Woburn.

doré d'ormoulu' that figured in all the grander rooms of the Hôtel de Grinberghen; some remain at Woburn in the Dining Room and Prince Albert's Dressing Room. Even the 'large Brass Octagon Hall Lanthorn, glaz'd with Plate glass' recorded in the hall at Woburn may represent one of the stair lights from Paris; it now seems to be represented by the central lantern in the Long Gallery.

At Bedford House there were a number of pier glasses with marble slabs beneath on carved and gilt frames to match, that read exactly like those of the Hôtel de Grinberghen: for example, two in the saloon and one in the library. Two more were in the saloon at Woburn, two in the 'Eating Room', one in the small drawing room, two in another dining room and two in the Green Drawing Room. The commodes at both houses seem to correspond with those in the Paris hôtel. In the Red Damask Room at Bedford House 'an Inlaid Commode very Richly Ornamented with Brass Work Gilt Festoon Mouldings, etc., the Tops of Curious Composition form'd into a Landscape and flowers' may well represent the 'grande Commode de bois satiné à fleurs très ornée de bronze et de cartel, doré d'or moulu, avec son marbre fin de 5 pieds' which stood in the *Salle du Daïs* and cost 1100 livres from Arnault. The 'very elegant tortoiseshell Commode with a shape front, curiously inlaid with Brass' in the Duchess's bedroom there may have been the 'grande Commode à arcade plaqué en bois des indes ornée de bronze doré d'or moulu avec son marbre campan' that had stood in her bedroom in Paris. The State Bedchamber at Woburn had a rosewood inlaid commode with rich ormolu ornaments which sounds as if it had come from Paris,¹ as does the 'rich Commode inlaid with brass and tortoiseshell' in the French bedchamber there. The 'Rosewood inlaid Commode with Italian Marble Top and Brass ornmts. or moulu' in the late Duke's dressing room at Woburn, now in the Library, appears to be that from the *Salle du Daïs* in Paris.

It seems highly probable that the splendid French *bureau à cylindre*, signed by J. H. Riesener,² that now stands in Prince Albert's Dressing Room at Woburn is that which stood in the Paris dining room; one of the library tables in the same room, certainly French of about the same date, with two extensions at the sides, seems to have been that bought for the Ambassador's use on September 11th, 1762.

Richard Ireland, who helped to make the 1771 inventory, had served in the Paris household and had learned to use the word *encoignure* if not to spell it. 'Encoineurs' with ormoulu mounts and coloured marble tops are recorded at both Bedford House and Woburn: two in the saloon at Bedford House and one in the library, two in the State Bedchamber at Woburn, one in the French Bedchamber and one in the Green Drawing Room there. A pair of encoignures by D. de Loose survive in the State

¹ It is probably that now in the Library.

² It must be remembered that Arnault was a merchant who sold furniture by many makers;

his bills give no indication of the makers of the furniture he sold.

Bedroom at Woburn, and two more by Roger Vandercruse (called La Croix) in the Queen's dressing room there.

The Blue Drawing Room contains a library table and *cartonnière* by Montigny; this cannot be recognized in the bills, but must date from the Paris embassy.

The 'small Inlaid Sheffanier Table with Draws and brass Rim' in the Duchess's Dressing Room at Bedford House and the 'inlaid Sheffanier Table with brass ornaments, Or moulu', in the State Bedchamber at Woburn probably figure as the two *tables de nuit* in Arnault's bill. The 'French Inlaid Writing Desk with three small Draws and Ornaments or moulu' in the Duchess's Dressing Room at Bedford House probably came from the Hôtel de Grinberghen, and the 'French Inlaid Dressing Table with a Glass in the Box' in her London bedroom was probably the 'belle toilette de bois rose plaqué à fleurs de bois violett garnie de porcelaine' which figured in her Paris bedchamber. It is possible that the 'two very fine Tortoiseshell China Cases Inlaid with Brass, and wrought brass ornaments with Wire Doors and green lutestring curtains' in the library were the twin pieces of furniture that figure as bookcases at Paris with taffetas curtains, one in the footmen's antechamber and one in the Duchess's bedroom; they cannot now be identified at Woburn. The draught and piquet tables in the library at Bedford House, and the Commerce and Fredille tables covered with green cloth in the hall at Woburn, recall those in the antechamber at Paris. There were several ormolu clocks at Bedford House, but they cannot be identified with the Duchess's purchases in Paris, unless the 'very elegant table clock mounted on Brass with Emblematical Ornaments' in her dressing room was that with the figure of Astronomy.

The Duke had a house in the Circus at Bath, where he went to be treated for gout, that was much less splendidly furnished than his other residences. It seems as if a good deal of the upstairs furniture from Paris went there; the Duchess's dressing room, for instance, contained 13 walnut French chairs, her bedroom 7 more; the front parlour 6 and 2 elbow chairs to match, and the back parlour 10 more.

At all events the study of the Paris bills and the English inventories leaves the reader with the consciousness that such an Embassy as the Duke's may well have done more than is commonly realized to bring fine French furniture to England, and to familiarize those who used it with the elegancies of French taste. It is perhaps significant that when the Ambassador-Duke's grandson came to 'improve' Woburn Abbey in 1787, he had his architect, Sir Henry Holland, design the library in the style of Versailles.