



E. W. Godwin by Collinson & Lock of London. Eaton Hall Rosewood China Cabinet

Ref: NPV000713

Price on Application

MAKER	Collinson & Lock
DESIGNER	Edward William Godwin
PERIOD	Aesthetic Movement
YEAR	1878
STYLE	Anglo-Japanese
ORIGIN	United Kingdom
MATERIALS	Rosewood
DIMENSIONS	H: 89 in (226.06 cm) W: 50 in (127 cm) D: 16 in (40.64 cm)
CONDITION	Good

About this piece

Edward William Godwin for Collinson & Lock, The Eaton Hall Cabinet

Edward William Godwin (1833–1886) for Collinson & Lock, the Eaton Hall cabinet.

Circa 1878, in rosewood, the scroll-carved broken arched Queen Anne pediment above a dentil and moulded frieze, with a pair of astragal-glazed doors flanked by shelves beneath fielded panels, above a central drawer and semi-circular cupboards. The moulded

top is above a pair of panelled doors with an open panelled section beneath, on shaped splayed feet.

With Japanesque engraved brass handles, hinges and lock plates, stamped “Collinson & Lock, London 7480”. The handles, hinges and lock plates are all stamped “Elsleys, Gt Portland St, London”.

Provenance

Eaton Hall, Cheshire.

A previous owner purchased this lot from a sale of the contents at Sweetenham's of Chester, 20th and 21st May 1959, where it states:

“283. Rosewood display cabinet, the upper portion enclosed with astragal glazed doors with side shelves, the lower portion enclosed with two panelled doors.”

This was the last mention of the rosewood cabinet before it was sold.

Godwin Attribution and Design Features

This piece has many features which firmly show Godwin's hand at work, i.e. the Queen Anne broken pediment, seen in Soros, Susan Weber, *The Secular Furniture of E. W. Godwin*, Butterfly cabinet, p. 227; a Queen Anne cabinet, p. 269; and an “over door”, p. 251. The dentil moulding to the top is identical to the Butterfly cabinet. The astragal-glazed doors and panelled lower doors are identical to a design for a table for Grey Towers, Susan Soros, *Secular Furniture*, p. 157, and similar detail can be seen on the doors of two cabinets on pp. 222–223.

The semi-circular central side doors and semi-circular open shelves above are identical to a dressing table and a sketch for a dresser, Susan Soros, *Secular Furniture*, p. 211; a design for a mantelpiece, p. 248; and a design for a buffet, p. 265. The integrated design of solids and voids in many of his cabinet designs, and the framed back panels to each individual shelf and framed panels to each side, is typical of his work. The splayed front feet are identical to the Four Seasons cabinet, p. 217.

The elongated handles with Japanesque engraved backplates simulate Japanese woven rush work, Susan Soros, *E. W. Godwin Aesthetic Movement, Architect and Designer*, p. 303, fig. 11-10, and *Secular Furniture*, p. 268, a detail he used in many combinations.

Sheraton and Queen Anne in Japan at Eaton Hall

“Sheraton and Queen Anne in Japan at Eaton Hall”. Only Godwin could have designed this exceptional work of art.

Possibly part of a larger commission, the Eaton Hall archivist also found a Collinson & Lock billiard table in the inventory at Eaton Hall. Godwin is known to have designed billiard tables for Collinson & Lock. A design appears in his sketchbook on the 6th of October 1873, carved in the Jacobean style with circular decorations of white storks in relief, interspersed with square panels. A corresponding entry on the 7th of October 1873 shows that he designed it for the McLaren house, a large commission that Godwin did at Addison Road, Kensington.

Eaton Hall and the Waterhouse Commission

The third Marquis of Westminster, who later became the 2nd Duke of Westminster, commissioned Sir Alfred Waterhouse to substantially remodel and rebuild Eaton Hall. The work began in 1869 and reached completion in 1883. The large drawing room can be seen in a photograph taken circa 1887, pl. 199 in Cooper, Jeremy, *Victorian and Edwardian Furniture and Interiors*, in which Cooper mentions that the Duke had spent £600,000 on the decoration alone and that Heaton, Butler and Bayne carried out the work.

In 1885, an inventory of the contents of Eaton Hall was carried out, and it is precisely at this point in time that the cabinet receives its first mention. Having occupied a place in the Ormand Sitting Room, 72 on the ground floor of the North Wing of the Waterhouse Hall, the cabinet was described as “A rosewood china cabinet with cupboards beneath and glass fronts at the top, 50ins”. The cabinet is then mentioned again in a 1917 inventory in the Angel Bedroom.

The cabinet made its next appearance in 1931 in the *Declaration of Trusts*, which was a valuation of the contents of Eaton Hall, appearing as T86/27 in the Stewards' Offices with a similar description, and then finally in the 1959 sale catalogue mentioned above.

Sotheby's and various other local auctioneers held many sales of the various contents of Eaton Hall from 1955 through to 1961, until the Hall was demolished in 1961. This description was compiled with the generous help and assistance of the Grosvenor Estate's Archive Department, Eaton Hall, Cheshire.

Collinson & Lock

Collinson & Lock of London, "Art Furnishers", was founded with the partnership of F. G. Collinson and G. J. Lock, former employees of Jackson and Graham. Designers employed by the firm included T. E. Collcutt, the architect of their premises; E. W. Godwin, who was paid a retainer to produce exclusive designs for the company from 1872 to 1874; H. W. Batley; and Stephen Webb.

They made furniture for the new Law Courts to designs by G. E. Street, along with Gillows and Holland & Sons, and began the decoration of the Savoy Theatre in 1881. Jackson and Graham were taken over in 1885, at the time when the firm had moved to Oxford Street and begun to focus on expensive commissions for grandiose London houses. The firm was taken over by Gillows in 1897.

The firm of Collinson & Lock was established in London in the third quarter of the 19th century and quickly achieved both commercial success and a leading position in the field of design. In 1871, the firm issued an impressive illustrated catalogue of *Artistic Furniture*, with plates drawn by J. Moyr Smith, assistant to Christopher Dresser, and in 1873 was trading from extensive newly built premises in St Bride Street.

The firm continued to produce the finest quality items of furniture and soon began to experiment with new materials and designs, becoming especially renowned for their distinctive combinations of rosewood and ivory and their intricate Italianate arabesques, traditional figures and scrolling foliage.

E. W. Godwin was Collinson & Lock's most important designer and the leading designer in the Japanese style of the period.

Construction and Movement

The cabinet breaks down into four pieces for ease of moving: the cornice is one; the centre-upper glazed display with drawer is two; the lower cabinet doors and its lower opening is three; and the plinth with feet is four.

Assembled, it weighs around 160 kg, or 25 stone. Separated, it is an easy job for two people to move it.