



# THE ROYAL OAK FOUNDATION

Americans in Alliance with the National Trust of England, Wales and Northern Ireland



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Spring 2018



# Dear Members & Friends,

2018 marks Royal Oak's 45th Anniversary. We will celebrate this in many ways—more with a focus on where we are as an organization today and what we hope for in the future.

In reviewing some of the histories of Royal Oak, I was surprised to find an event in 1983 that was noted as pivotal in transforming the Foundation's relationship with the Trust from one of just growing 'friendship' to one of a serious fundraising partnership. The connections of this historic event with what Royal Oak has more recently accomplished and my own personal history is wonderfully satisfying.

Arthur Prager, Royal Oak Executive Director from 1982 to 1986, wanted to up the Foundation's fundraising game and expand its national reputation. As is often the case, it starts with a key person: In 1982, Prager discovered that Edwina Sandys, a granddaughter of Winston Churchill, was organizing an exhibition of Churchill's paintings in New York City entitled "Painting as a Pastime." Prager deemed this fortuitous discovery to be "a miracle and right on schedule." In the late spring of the next year, Royal Oak held its first significant benefit event around the show's opening. The exhibition was one of the highlights of *Britain Salutes New York 1983*, city-wide cultural festival, and I was working for a division of Ogilvy & Mather managing the more than 100 events. The benefit dinner and the show's tour to four other cities raised funds and visibility for Royal Oak and created new momentum for the organization.

Coming full-circle to this year, you will see that our appeal to help support the "Keep Churchill at Chartwell" National Trust initiative is now complete (see pages 7-8). The paintings in

Churchill's studio at Chartwell give tangible expression to the many new interpretive programs that will excite visitors daily just as the exhibition did 35 years ago.

Other big news for 2018 is our appeal to help the National Trust finish off a multi-year and multi-task restoration effort for Stowe. Stowe is one of the leading garden and landscape properties in England and has a wide significance in the history of garden design in Europe, Russia and America (see pages 3-4). It is among the most visited Trust properties. We are pleased to be able to make a difference in getting it to this final stage of restoration.



Our spring 2018 program plans (see page 10) are exciting and varied. I call your attention to those presented by Professor Madge Dresser, an American on the history faculty at the University of Bristol, on Slavery and the British Country House. Dresser's article (see pages 11-12) reveals some of her ground-breaking research on this topic, and we are excited to hear and see more about this relatively unknown and untold story.

I want to say thank-you to all those members I have met throughout my travels since joining Royal Oak in May 2017, and I look forward to meeting more of our loyal members and patrons this year. Let's celebrate our 45th and build on this milestone for our future together.

Sincerely,

David Nathans  
Executive Director & CEO

## THE NIGEL SEELEY FELLOWSHIP



The Spangled Bedroom at Knole. The bed was once covered in silver sequins, or spangles, now mostly lost.

Applications for The 2018 Nigel Seeley Fellowship will be open soon. This year, the project will focus on the conservation of the fabrics in The Spangled Bedroom at Knole. The fellowship will commence mid-August and run through November. Accommodations for the Seeley Fellows will be located in Seven Oaks, Kent.

For more information on the project, application process and deadlines, please contact The Royal Oak Foundation at [Scholarships@royal-oak.org](mailto:Scholarships@royal-oak.org).



THE ROYAL OAK FOUNDATION

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The north front of Mount Stewart, voted one of the world's top ten gardens and the recipient of funds raised in a 2015 Royal Oak appeal.

## Celebrating the 45th Anniversary of the creation of The Royal Oak Foundation!

We are excited to celebrate the 45th anniversary of the Royal Oak Foundation with you this year! In 1973, we began promoting the National Trust across the United States giving tens of thousands of American Anglophiles access to hundreds of treasured sites in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Since that time, raising awareness and furthering the work of the National Trust remains at the heart of our mission.



restoration of the iconic gardens and its temples, monuments and sculptures (see pages 3-4). For our members and patrons, we will continue to increase ways to offer you access to National Trust properties through new travel opportunities and a diverse series of lectures that will take place across the U.S. This spring we will be introducing our new and updated website which will bring all Americans enhanced accessibility to Royal Oak news and events and to the National Trust.

As we reflect on our history, we are so grateful to you, our family of supporters, for investing in our work through your memberships, appeal donations, and participation in our programs, special events and trips. It has been your active engagement and generosity that has enabled Royal Oak to make an impact on the Trust's priority efforts to protect and promote its historically significant properties and enhance its educational initiatives. With your future support, we will continue to cement our strong bond with the National Trust.

We will commemorate this anniversary year with a number of exciting events, programs, initiatives and a book, *The Country House: Past, Present, Future — Great Houses of the British Isles*, written by Royal Oak Board Member Sir David Cannadine and lecturer Jeremy Musson (see cover at right). A milestone gala is being planned in New York for late-October. More information on this special event will be coming soon and we hope you will join us. We are also pleased to launch our 2018 "Stowe Restoration Project Appeal" that will help the Trust raise funds to complete the important

Looking back, we remember the beginning years that inspired the establishment of our 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit charity, one of the first of its kind created to support an institution abroad. Lady O'Neill of the Maine first suggested the idea of an "American Friends" organization to the Chairman of the National Trust, the Earl of Antrim, in the early 1970s. Lady O'Neill was a member of the National Trust Council and the wife of Terence O'Neill, the then Prime Minister of Northern Ireland. The Trust had been interested in establishing a deeper relationship with the U.S., and this affiliate group idea was the perfect solution. In 1972, Lawrence Rich, the press manager for the Trust, set out on an extensive U.S. lecture tour to gauge interest and soon thereafter, The Royal Oak Foundation was established along with its initial Board and first Executive Director.

In the early years, the core of Royal Oak's activities centered around lectures, tours, fellowships and scholarships. The goal was to increase U.S. awareness of the foundation's

mission. Moving towards becoming a stronger fundraising partner of the National Trust, the foundation became very involved with saving and preserving the battlefield on which the renowned Battle of Hastings was fought in 1066. In 1987, Royal Oak launched its first site-specific appeal to raise \$400,000 over two years for the preservation of Kedleston Hall, located in Derbyshire and designed by Robert Adam. A 2015 appeal focused on Mount Stewart in Northern Ireland, one of the world's top ten gardens. Since that time, Royal Oak has established itself as a venerable partner of the National Trust, collecting millions of dollars for dozens of projects taking place all over England, Northern Ireland and Wales.

We are looking forward to the year to come as we focus our efforts on fundraising for Stowe, growing our family of members, sponsors and supporters and enhancing our communications. Your philanthropic support translates into building our resources for the next 45 years. We invite you to continue your active and generous support this year—and for the years to come. Together, we will build the Royal Oak Foundation into an even stronger partner of the National Trust and preserve and protect historic places and spaces – for ever, for every one. 🌿



Royal Oak and the National Trust are pleased to announce the fall publication of *The Country House: Past, Present, Future*, authored by Royal Oak Board member Sir David Cannadine and lecturer Jeremy Musson. The book offers a magnificent look at the lifestyle, architecture, and interior design of several historic landmark homes in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland through the centuries. Published by Rizzoli, you can reserve your copy today. For more information contact, Branwynne Kennedy, at [bkennedy@royal-oak.org](mailto:bkennedy@royal-oak.org).





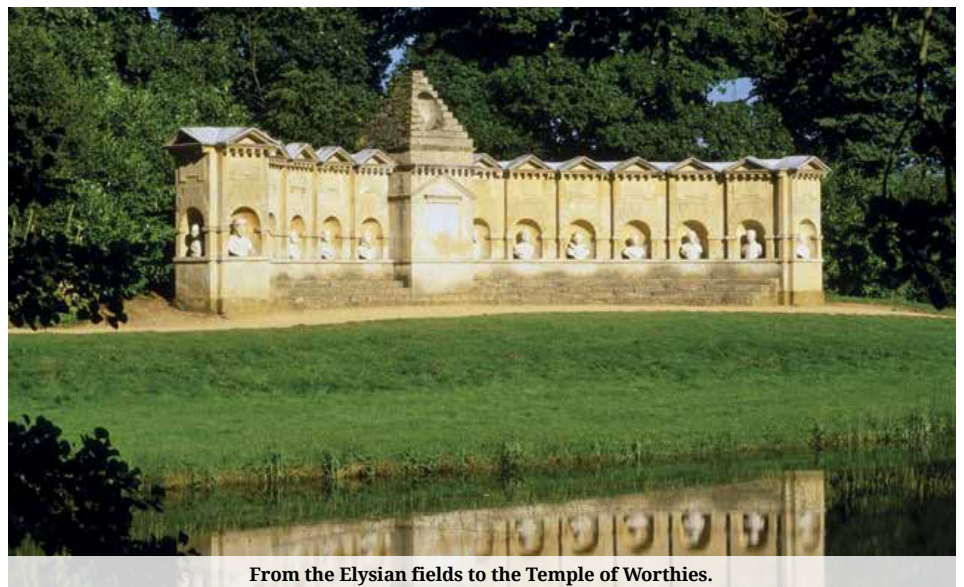
The Palladian Bridge in Autumn at Stowe, Buckinghamshire.

## The Stowe Restoration Project

The Royal Oak Foundation has recently embarked on its appeal to raise \$200,000 to help the National Trust complete its "Stowe Landscape Legacy Programme." We invite you to aid us in reaching our appeal goal and help restore this treasured landscape adorned with monuments, temples and sculpture back to its original splendor. Read on to learn more about Stowe's rich history and the restoration projects that have been completed, as well as ones that are in the works. We hope it will entice you to visit magnificent Stowe on your next trip to the United Kingdom and to help us reach our fundraising goal.

### History of Stowe

The National Trust acquired the gardens and parkland of Stowe, located in Buckinghamshire, in 1989 from the co-educational day and boarding school, Stowe School, that is housed in the original house rebuilt in the late 17th-century by Sir Richard Temple, 3rd Baronet. The gardens were created by almost all the leading designers of the period including John Vanbrugh, James Leoni, William Kent, Charles Bridgeman and Capability Brown, and represents every phase of late 18th-century garden design. They are regarded as among the finest gardens in Europe and seen as the birthplace of the naturalistic landscape movement that influenced the design of major estates all over Europe and in Russia. The garden's importance lies in the quality and scale of the designed landscape, the innovative garden designs and its historical context.



From the Elysian fields to the Temple of Worthies.





The Temple of Concord and Victory, North East view, before restoration.



The Temple of Concord and Victory in the early morning, after restoration, the largest and grandest of Stowe's temples. It was originally called 'The Grecian Temple' and built between 1747-9. Its designer still remains unknown.

The principal gardens have survived in their late Georgian form, essentially without major alterations. The 250 acres of garden and surrounding 750 acres of parkland contain 40 Grade I listed temples and monuments. (Grade I is a United Kingdom historic structure designation that deems that a building or structure is of exceptional interest and may not be demolished or altered without permission from relevant government agencies.) This number is more than twice as much as any other English garden. In addition, Stowe boasts 100 designed vistas. As well as being a work of inestimable beauty and quality, the Stowe landscape evokes the beliefs and ambitions of the owners, the Temple-Grenville family, who were aligned with the aristocratic Whigs, the dominant political party in the 18th-century. These beliefs run through the garden design and architecture like a leitmotif, adding historical significance to the beauty of the monuments.

### Restoration begins

Upon their 1989 acquisition, the National Trust began one of the most ambitious garden restoration programs it has ever undertaken. The first phase involved major landscape work, dredging of the lakes and restoring some of the most iconic out buildings such as the Temple of Concord and Victory. Phase Two began with the acquisition of the New Inn, a derelict Georgian farmhouse adjacent to the formal gardens, which provided lodging for the earliest visitors to Stowe 300 years ago. The building was restored and transformed into a new Visitor Center that opened in 2012, giving visitors the chance

to see the original parlor rooms alongside new facilities. In 2016, the Visitor Center welcomed over 214,000 visitors.

### Additional restoration projects

2015 saw the start of several new restoration phases of the Stowe gardens. Known as the "Stowe Landscape Legacy Programme," this restoration is comprised of 54 tasks that would take place over a period of five years. The goal of this project is to reinstate many of the lost temples and monuments that once 'dressed' the gardens like pieces of a theater set, while also undertaking maintenance on the natural elements and lakes. Almost

another third of the original garden will be rejuvenated and made accessible to the public, including the reinstatement of land currently used as a 9-hole golf course.

To date, a majority of 45 of the tasks have been completed, with the remaining nine to be undertaken in 2018 and 2019. These tasks include the restoration and replanting of the Queens Theatre and the restoration of the Octagon Lake Cascade, as well as two reinstatements: The statue of Hercules and the Erymanthian Boar and, the largest project, the statuary group of Apollo and the Nine Muses. Other tasks include repairs of ironwork and stonemasonry of the Lamport Lodge Gates and Railings and the restoration of the Temple of Modern Virtue ruin.

The entire restoration project will cost £2,560,000. The National Trust has contributed over half a million pounds from its reserved and restricted funds and an anonymous donor has pledged a challenge 'match donation' of £1,000,000. To date, total matching funds secured from legacies, charitable trusts and donations stands at £1,410,000. A balance of £150,000 is still needed in order to complete the final phase of the project.

Royal Oak is pleased to partner with the National Trust on the final phase of this restoration project as Stowe is a verdant and horticultural jewel in the United Kingdom crown. Every dollar that Royal Oak raises brings the gardens and landscape of Stowe closer to its 18th-century glory. For more information about Royal Oaks' Stowe appeal and how you can help, see the box below. 🌱



Temple of the Worthies was designed c.1735 by William Kent for Lord Cobham. The busts by Rysbrack and Scheemakers include one of Sir Thomas Gresham.

## 2018 ROYAL OAK STOWE RESTORATION PROJECT APPEAL

The Royal Oak Foundation has recently embarked on an appeal to raise \$200,000 to help the National Trust complete its "Stowe Landscape Legacy Programme." For more information on our appeal and to make a donation to help raise the remaining \$200,000, please visit: [royal-oak.org/donate](http://royal-oak.org/donate) or contact Director of Development Greg Joye at [gjoye@royal-oak.org](mailto:gjoye@royal-oak.org) or 212.480.2889, ext. 212.





Wallington Hall, with the curved driveway leading up to the entrance.

# Letters from a Socialist: The Archives of the Trevelyan of Wallington Hall

by Alexandra Healey, Trevelyan Project Archivist, Newcastle University Special Collections

On the first of August 1936, the former Member of Parliament and Lord Lieutenant of Northumberland, Sir Charles Philips Trevelyan 3rd Baronet, stood before the tenants of his estate and made an announcement. He declared that the entirety of his family home, Wallington Estate, comprising of the Hall and over 13,000 acres, would be donated to the National Trust following his death.

His ardent socialist beliefs and personal distaste for the concept of private land ownership had influenced Sir Charles' decision, but also his shrewd understanding of financial challenges estates, such as Wallington, were likely to face in the near future from changes to taxation.

The decision to donate the estate to the National Trust would impact not only the tenants of the estate, but also Charles' wife Lady Mary (known as Molly) and their six surviving children; Pauline, George, Kitty, Marjorie, Patricia and Geoffrey.

A unique and intimate insight into Charles and Molly's life together is emerging from the family's personal archive, held by Newcastle University Special Collections. Comprised mainly of correspondence, the project to catalogue this collection in its entirety for the first time is underway.



Trevelyan family correspondence

The letters span the breadth of the couple's lives and include letters of courtship, telegrams announcing the birth of their children and discussion of day-to-day matters such as running the estate or management of the household staff.

Throughout their marriage, they wrote to each other daily when their respective commitments caused them to be separated, resulting in hundreds of letters which reveal moments of passion, companionship and conflict.

The correspondence is complemented by the survival of the family photograph albums: 39 volumes compiled by Molly between the 1880s and the 1960s. The photographs, newspaper cuttings and ephemera, annotated by Molly, show the family at work and play.

To protect the fragile originals, digital surrogates are being created and made available via the University's browser-based book viewer *Page Turners*. This allows new audiences to enjoy these fascinating glimpses



"There are four things which I want to ensure:

- 1, That the control of the Estate and the enjoyment of its surplus values should no longer be in private hands.
- 2, That Wallington, its grounds and its valuable contents should be accessible for all time to the people, and should never pass into selfish or unsympathetic ownership.
- 3, That the Wallington Estate should not be broken up.
4. That the connection of my family with Wallington should not be severed.

I have therefore made my will in which "at my death I bequeath Wallington House and grounds and the "Wallington Estate to the National Trust.  
 "It will from the time of my death become public property in "public ownership, and secure from disruption and dispersion.  
 "I am also ensuring the continued connection of my family with "the house and land. After my death Lady Trevelyan, and after "her death my children, will live at Wallington as tenants of "the National Trust as long as they wish to do so.  
 "There will be obtained for this countryside a permanent "ownership by a public body, who will, I am convinced, be "anxious to maintain the Wallington tradition.  
 "Of no time in the world's history is it so true as today that "the 'old order changeth, giving place to new'.  
 "I am certain that what I am doing will be helping to preserve "a great deal of what is good and beautiful in our national "past, while ensuring to the people a larger share in the land "and wealth of their country."

An excerpt of Sir Charles' 1936 speech detailing his plans to bequeath Wallington house, its contents and the grounds to the National Trust.

into the everyday experiences of a landed family in the turbulence and uncertainty of early twentieth-century England.

Charles' radical beliefs ensured that the Trevelyan family were not the average landed family. Alongside reminders to send party invitations, or to find a forgotten set of collar stays, are discussions of Charles' strong objections to the First World War (over which he resigned his government position), accounts of family tours of Soviet Russia and frank discussion of their agnostic beliefs.

Every envelope holds new discoveries about the family activities and social circle. The letters link them to such well known influential figures such as Winston Churchill, Sidney and Beatrice Webb and George Bernard Shaw.

In addition to Charles and Molly's lives, the archive holds the stories of each of their children, whose lives differed as much from each other as they did from their parents'. One example of this is Kitty who was born in 1908. Following a Quaker education and

attending Oxford University, she hiked solo across Canada in 1931.

Shortly after this, she married the German musician Georg Götsch. In 1936, prompted by the breakdown of her marriage, she fled Nazi Germany with her daughters. Kitty never married again, but in later life participated in religious radio broadcasts, wrote two autobiographies and became involved with the Subud spiritual movement.

Sir Charles lived until 1958, after which his wishes became reality. The estate and buildings transferred to the Trust, with his family able to reside in the house for the duration of their lives. Wallington Hall was Molly's home until her death in 1966.

The Wallington Estate remains a National Trust property today and continues to be enjoyed by visitors young and old. Sir Charles' dream of securing public access to the estate has been a reality since the day he made his announcement on the lawn over 70 years ago. 🐾



The Trevelyan family portrait in 1925.

## WALLINGTON HALL

Visit Wallington Hall and discover more about the Trevelyan family and their treasured collections and quirky curiosities. Be sure to wander the grounds that include lakes, parkland, farmland and a hidden walled garden.

For more information, go to [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wallington](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wallington).

## NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

The Trevelyan family archives are available for research at Newcastle University Special Collections.

Details on how to access them, and a link to the digitized photograph albums on Page Turners can be found on the website — [www.ncl.ac.uk/library/special-collections](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/library/special-collections).

## BOOKS RELATED TO WALLINGTON HALL

If you would like to learn more about Wallington Hall and the Trevelyan family, check out these books authored by family members and the National Trust:

### A Very British Family: The Trevelyan and Their World

by Laura Trevelyan  
(Royal Oak Board Member)

### Lady Trevelyan and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood

by John Batchelor

### Wallington

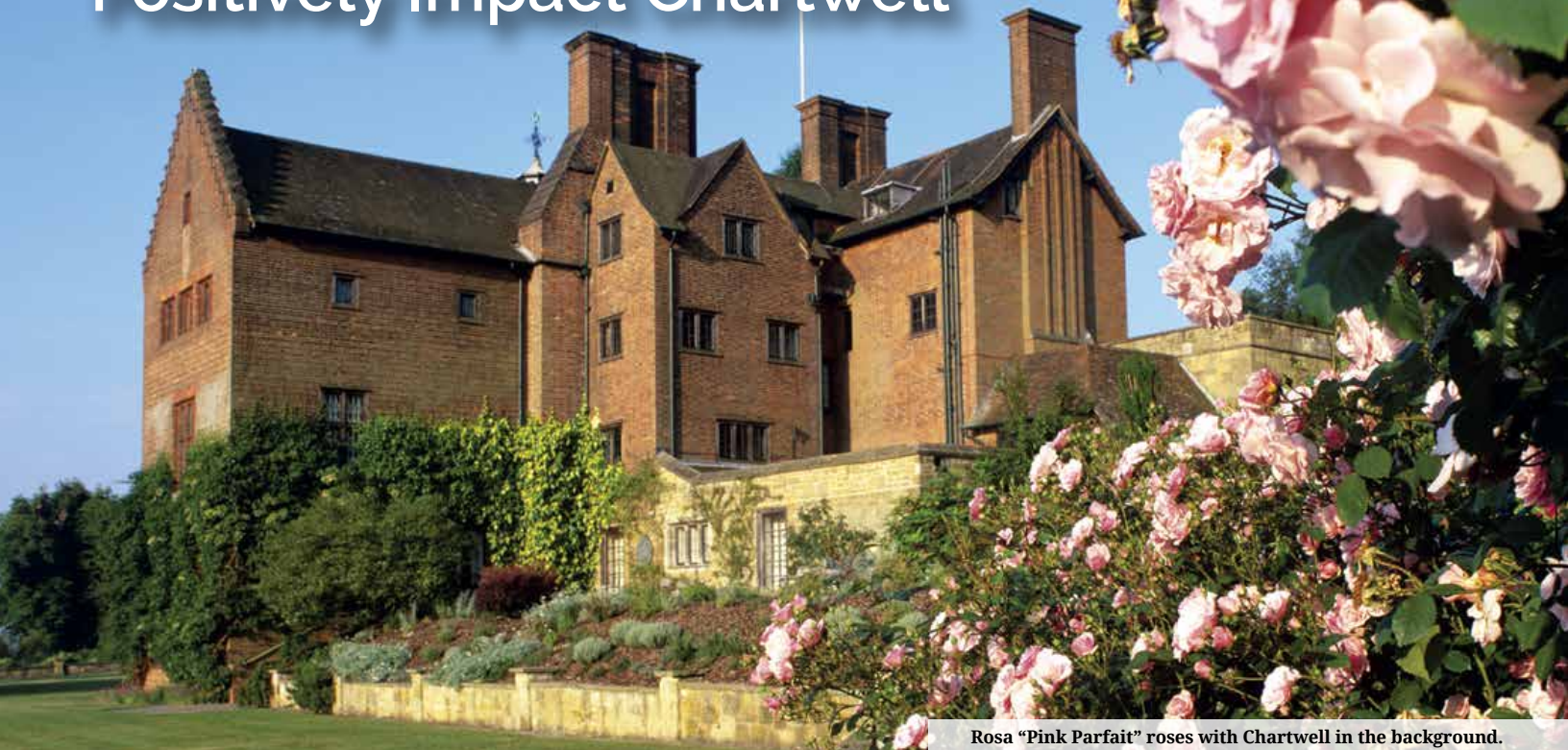
by National Trust

### Wallington, Northumberland: National Trust Guidebook

by Raleigh Trevelyan



# Royal Oak Patrons Positively Impact Chartwell



Rosa "Pink Parfait" roses with Chartwell in the background.

**T**he Royal Oak Foundation wants to thank its patrons for their generous donations to our recent "Keep Churchill at Chartwell" Appeal. Your support has already helped the National Trust complete many educational and restoration projects. Zoë Colbeck, the National Trust General Manager of Chartwell extends her thanks as well:

"We at Chartwell wish to sincerely thank Royal Oak and all of its Chartwell appeal donors for their generous support of the National Trust's efforts to "Keep Churchill at Chartwell." We invite you to visit us to see firsthand the impact your contributions have made on the interior of the house. They have enabled us to preserve our remarkable, original collection of objects that were owned by Sir Winston Churchill and that have been at Chartwell since his death. We, here at Chartwell, are determined to build on the last 50 years of Chartwell being open to the public and will continue to reinvigorate Churchill's legacy for generations to come. We have also improved on how we tell the Chartwell stories to visitors with an outreach education programme. In the first six months of the programme we have worked with over 1000 local school children. We look forward to welcoming you at Chartwell and sharing more information about how your generous donations have supported our projects. The "Keep Churchill at Chartwell" Appeal is of international significance, and we are so touched to be receiving messages of support and donations from across the world. Your generous donations go straight to the Appeal and will help us reach our goal."

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*\*We are very grateful for contributions of any amount. Due to limited space, we are unable to list donor names of gifts under \$250.*

**CONTINUE TO CELEBRATE CHURCHILL & CHARTWELL**

The Royal Oak Foundation has partnered with Davidoff of Geneva to celebrate the man and his home: Winston Churchill and Chartwell.

Last fall, Davidoff introduced a new cigar to their Winston Churchill collection called The Late Hour. Visitors to Chartwell will notice some tabletops displaying ashtrays animated with partially smoked cigars—bringing to light the fact that Churchill found certain rooms in his home ideal for smoking and late night contemplation.

The Late Hour cigars are intended to be enjoyed at the end of an evening, when there is time for reflection and creative thinking.

If you enjoy a good cigar, or know someone who does, consider purchasing a Churchill's Chartwell commemorative box of The Late Hour. Although The Royal Oak Foundation's appeal for Chartwell is over, a portion of the proceeds will continue to benefit Churchill's beloved home.

For more information or to order, go to [www.davidoffgeneva.com/Royal-Oak](http://www.davidoffgeneva.com/Royal-Oak).



The house and garden at Chartwell, Kent.

## Royal Oak Patron Donations at Work at Chartwell

### The Oral History Project

A team of volunteers and some staff members have been conducting interviews with key family members as well as visitors to Chartwell. The information gathered will aid the docents with their interpretations of the house and gardens. In addition, four oral histories have been recorded by the Trust volunteer team providing new insights into the experiences of those living and working at Chartwell pre-1960.

### Primary School Outreach Sessions

The sessions focus on three themes: Churchill the Leader, Churchill the Artist and Churchill's Chartwell—all reflecting different aspects of Churchill's interests and talents. The children are taught how to develop skills in persuasive language; they try their hand at landscape painting, and learn about the house, its history, its architecture and gardens, and the famous family who lived in the house, as well as the many dedicated people who worked in the house.





## National Trust Director-General Dame Helen Ghosh Moves On

The National Trust's current Director-General, Dame Helen Ghosh, will leave the conservation charity in early March to take up a new role as the Master of Balliol College, at Oxford University.

During over five years at the helm, Helen has overseen the implementation of an ambitious 10-year strategy, which has seen the Trust

return to its roots by playing an active part in meeting some of the big challenges facing the nation such as the declining health of the natural environment, and the loss of green spaces in towns and cities.

Membership numbers and visits have soared since 2012, with both now at an all-time high. Around 25 million people paid to visit a

Trust property last year, while there were an estimated 200 million visits to the coastlines and countryside the charity looks after for the nation. Also, in fall 2017, the Trust welcomed its 5 millionth member!

Under Helen's leadership, income has also grown significantly and the Trust's finances strengthened. This has allowed the Trust to spend more than ever before – over £100m a year – on the conservation of its houses, collections, coast and countryside. The charity has also been able to invest more in specialist posts, doubling the number of its curators (increasing the number from 36 to around 65 since October 2016 alone), and employing more rural surveyors, gardeners and building surveyors to support its strategy.

Paying tribute to Helen's time in charge of the Trust, Tim Parker, the organization's chairman said: "Helen has done an outstanding job as Director-General. She will be leaving the organisation in great shape – one clear of its future direction with ever growing levels of investment in conservation. We are indebted to Helen for all she has done and wish her well in her new role."

Commenting on her decision to step down, Helen said: "There is never a good time to leave a job that you love, so the decision was a very tough one. But the Trust is in a great place and in great hands, and 2018, which will be my sixth year here, seemed the right time to hand over to someone else. I am enormously proud of all the Trust has achieved over the past five years, with the conservation of nature and heritage at the heart of what we do and an extraordinary growth in membership, support and visits."

Helen will remain at the Trust until March 2018. She begins at Oxford in April. 🌿

## The National Trust Announces Hilary McGrady as the New Director-General



Hilary McGrady, the current National Trust Chief Operating Officer, has been named Director-General. She will officially start her new position in March.

Hilary joined the National Trust in 2005 as the Regional Director,

first in Northern Ireland, then in Wales and finally in London and the South East.

Originally trained in graphic design, Hilary's career began in the liquor industry working on brand marketing. In 1998, she transitioned to the non-profit sector and became director of a national arts charity. In 2003, Hilary returned to the private sector and became a cultural tourism consultant.

Commenting on her appointment, Hilary said: "I am immensely proud to have been appointed as Director-General of the National Trust. This is a charity I love because it looks after the things that matter to me personally — the outdoors, the arts, heritage, nature and beauty. But more importantly these are things that I believe matter to the nation which is why we have 5 million members and many more supporters. I am looking forward to building on that support and inspiring even more people to look after the places that matter to them."

Tim Parker, the Trust's Chair, said: "The decision to appoint Hilary was made by the Board of Trustees and I am pleased to say that the decision was unanimous. Hilary's appointment followed a rigorous selection process during which we considered a range of excellent candidates from a variety of different backgrounds and organisations. I look forward to working closely with Hilary over the coming years and know she will do an outstanding job leading the Trust." 🌿



# Spring 2018 Royal Oak Calendar

Since its founding in 1973, Royal Oak has brought some of Britain's most respected scholars to the United States to lecture on a wide range of topics regarding National Trust properties, British history, architecture and design, decorative arts and garden design. This seasons' lectures will deepen members' appreciation of Anglo-American heritage and culture and, we hope, encourage support for the Royal Oak's important work with The National Trust of England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. For 26 years, the Drue Heinz Trust has been our lead lecture sponsor.

## MEMBER AND PUBLIC LECTURES

### MARCH

- 19** Robert O'Byrne  
Los Angeles, CA | 12:45 p.m.
- 20** Robert O'Byrne  
San Francisco, CA | 7:00 p.m.
- 22** Robert O'Byrne  
La Jolla, CA | 6:45 p.m.
- 26** Robert O'Byrne  
Charleston, SC | 6:30 p.m.
- 27** Robert O'Byrne  
Atlanta, GA | 6:30 p.m.
- 29** Robert O'Byrne  
Chicago, IL | 6:30 p.m.

### APRIL

- 5** Prof. Madge Dresser  
New York, NY | 6:15 p.m.
- 9** Prof. Madge Dresser  
Philadelphia, PA | 6:30 p.m.
- 10** Prof. Madge Dresser  
Charleston, SC | 6:30 p.m.
- 12** Prof. Madge Dresser  
Boston, MA | 6:00 p.m.
- 16** Charles Hind  
La Jolla, CA | 6:45 p.m.
- 17** Charles Hind  
San Francisco, CA | 7:00 p.m.
- 19** Charles Hind  
New York, NY | 6:15 p.m.
- 23** Charles Hind  
Philadelphia, PA | 6:30 p.m.
- 24** Charles Hind  
Washington, DC | 7:00 p.m.
- 30** Angus Haldane  
New York, NY | 6:15 p.m.

### MAY

- 1** Angus Haldane  
Philadelphia, PA | 6:30 p.m.
- 2** Angus Haldane  
Boston, MA | 6:00 p.m.
- 7** Angus Haldane  
Washington, DC | 7:00 p.m.
- 9** Prof. Zara Anishanslin  
Philadelphia, PA | 6:30 p.m.
- 17** Prof. Zara Anishanslin  
New York, NY | 6:15 p.m.

## ROYAL OAK MEMBER TOURS

### APRIL

- 9** **Thomas Cole's Journey: Atlantic Crossings**  
*Curator-led Exhibition Tour:*  
New York, NY | 11:00 a.m.
- 12** **Tour of the Good Housekeeping Institute**  
*Behind the Scenes:* New York, NY | 11:00 a.m.
- 25** **New York Public Library Special Collections**  
*Behind the Scenes:* New York, NY | 5:30 p.m.

### MAY

- 2** **Literary New York and New York Society Library**  
*Walking Tour and Behind the Scenes:*  
New York, NY | 3:00 p.m.
- 8** **O'Sullivan Antiques**  
*Gallery Visit:* New York, NY | 5:15 p.m.
- 9** **Conversations with Collectors**  
*Private Passions:* New York, NY | 2:00 p.m.
- 11** **British Greenwich Village**  
*Walking Tour:* New York, NY | 11:00 a.m.
- 18** **Prospect Park and Montauk Club**  
*Walking Tour and Lunch at Private Club:*  
New York, NY | 11:00 a.m.



Prospect Park, Brooklyn, New York

## LECTURES & SPEAKERS

Romantic English Country Homes  
**ROBERT O'BYRNE**

Hidden Connections: Slavery  
and the British Country House  
**PROF. MADGE DRESSER**

Secrets, Spies, and Subterfuge:  
Civil War Portraits Revealed  
**ANGUS HALDANE**

The Country Houses  
of Sir Edwin Lutyens  
**CHARLES HIND**

Woman in Silk: Hidden Histories  
of the British Atlantic World  
**PROF. ZARA ANISHANSLIN**

*Some lectures and tours  
might have been added after  
we went to press. For the most  
up-to-date information, please  
see the programs brochure  
or [royal-oak.org/lectures](http://royal-oak.org/lectures).*

## TRAVEL PROGRAMS 2018

**MAY 22-27**  
Chelsea Flower Show and Hidden London

**MAY 27 - JUNE 3**  
Stately Homes of Oxford  
& the Cotswolds—Meet the Owners

**JULY 21-29**  
A Journey Through Glorious Yorkshire  
& the Lake District

**AUGUST 11-18**  
Historic Royal Houses and  
Stately Homes of Kent

**SEPT 9-18**  
Edinburgh, Glasgow & the Scottish Highlands  
& Islands

**SEPT 29 - OCT 6**  
Isle of Wight & Thomas Hardy Country

For more Lecture and Tour information and to register: [royal-oak.org/lectures](http://royal-oak.org/lectures) or call 212.480.2889 ext. 201.

For more Travel Program information and to register: [royal-oak.org/programs/travel](http://royal-oak.org/programs/travel) or call 866.834.8358.





The Rotunda at Ickworth, Suffolk.

# The British Country House and Atlantic Slavery

by Madge Dresser, Honorary Professor of History, University of Bristol

There are few things more emblematic of Britain's heritage than the great country houses dotted across the English landscape and the historic townhouses located in its major cities. Such properties are not just simply objects of architectural and artistic magnificence. They also serve as expressions of the owner's wealth, power and privilege. During the past 40 years, scholars and historians have researched the links between these properties and some uncomfortable aspects of British social history.

## English gentry prosperity and slavery

In the past two decades, new connections with England's role in the Atlantic world, in particular to slavery and the wealth derived from slavery, have been unearthed. Much money was made in England from the slave trade before it was officially abolished in 1807, and it continued to be made through the trade of slave-produced goods up until the 1830s. Even when most Africans in England's colonies were formally emancipated in 1833, the British government moved to compensate slave-owners a total of £20 million for their 'loss of property.' The latest research suggests about 10 percent of English landowners had financial connections to slavery.

In the 1990s, I began investigating the gentry and wealthy merchants who owned the

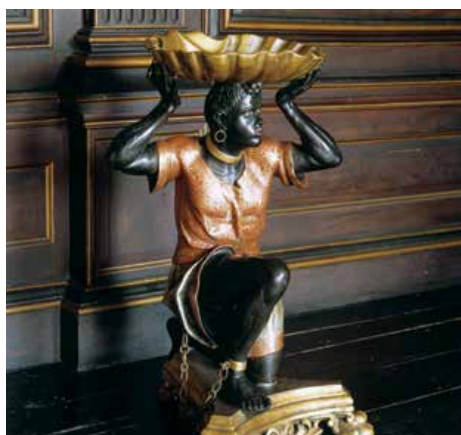
gracious townhouses that are laid out in the squares and crescents in some of Britain's major cities. While looking at the history of the houses built between 1700 and the 1820s in the historic port of Bristol, I was surprised to find that a disproportionate number of them were involved in one way or another in slavery.

Some of these homeowners owned shares in slave trading monopolies, such as the South Sea Company, while others were investors in slaving voyages. Even more of these families had money invested in the trade and processing of slave-produced goods, such as sugar, tobacco and rum. Others derived profit from the export of guns and other manufactured goods to slave-trading warlords in West Africa, as well as to the slave-trading leaders in North America and the Caribbean.



Pastry pantry table with cakes &amp; desserts at Penryn Castle, Gwynedd, Wales.





One of the torcheres in the Balcony Room at Dyrham Park, Gloucestershire.

Through additional research using property deeds, merchant records and family histories, I was able to discover more links of slavery to the renovation of stately country homes near Bristol, including Dyrham Park, Doddington House and Kings Weston.

*“In 2020, the National Trust will be holding a series of nationwide exhibitions and events at all of their houses that will explore how slavery shaped the English country house.”*

As their wealth grew, more and more of the Bristol area merchants and manufacturers were able to build or acquire grand country homes. I discovered that long established members of the Bristol gentry, such as the Smith family of Ashton Court, married wealthy West Indian slave-traders' daughters to help ease their cash flow problems and to pay for the family manse renovations. In addition, I found that Baron Thomas Onslow was able to build his Palladian mansion at Clandon Park in Surrey 'owing to his judicious marriage to the heiress of a West Indian fortune.' Materials used in the building and furnishing of these and other treasure houses of Britain such as 'Spanish mahogany' and other fine woods actually came from Caribbean slave plantations, as did the bowls of sugar and tankards of rum that adorned their dining tables. Profits from sugar plantations also aided family fortunes and defrayed the remodelling costs of such homes as Penryhn Castle whose Pennant family owned five plantations in Jamaica. The kneeling black figures adorning some of Dyrham Park's interior are best understood in the context of the property's owners (the

Wynter and Blathwayt families) who were variously involved with the expansion of Atlantic slavery. Clandon Park, Penryhn Castle and Dyrham Park are all now National Trust properties.

### National Trust reconsiders property interpretation

In light of this association with slavery and slave-produced goods, all British cultural institutions, including the National Trust, have had to reconsider the way they approach the study and interpretation of the stately homes and properties in their possession.

For the bicentenary of the abolition of the British slave trade in 2007, the National Trust published material on the slave-trades' links to some of its properties in its national magazine and on its website, resulting in some critical response from its membership, but an interest from scholars and a call for more study and discussion.

In 2009, I helped to organize a conference with English Heritage (now Historic England) and the National Trust titled 'Slavery and the British Country House,' which brought together historians, curators, country house owners and black British history activists. The conference and resulting publication explored how country houses might be reconsidered in the light of their links to slavery and how such links might be presented to visitors.

During my research, I was able to get to know some of the National Trust curators who

were just beginning to research the links of their properties to the slave trade. I have recently been working with the Trust on their programs for the coming years. In 2020, the National Trust will be holding a series of nationwide exhibitions and events at all of their houses that will explore how slavery shaped the English country house.

As a result of my interest and investigation of this subject, I have become part of a small, but growing group of historians who are now considering Britain's stately homes as not simply objects of aesthetic wonder, but as the expressions of the power relationships that were part of Britain's growing involvement in imperial expansion.

The full stories of Britain's treasure houses are at times both shocking and poignant, and they are only just beginning to be told. I am delighted to be coming to the United States to speak to Royal Oak members about this important part of English history. And on a final note, it is very exciting to work with an organization that has done so much to further a rounded appreciation of British culture and history. 🌿

*Professor Madge Dresser, F.R.Hist.S., R.S.A. worked for many years as Associate Professor of History at the University of the West of England where she is presently a visiting Senior Research Fellow. She was recently appointed Honorary Professor of History at the University of Bristol. She has published numerous articles and spoken widely on British Atlantic slavery and its legacy.*



Lady Elizabeth Noel Wriothesley by the Studio of Peter Lely, at Petworth House, Sussex.

Professor Dresser presents "Hidden Connections: Slavery and the British Country House" in several east coast cities in April. Please see page 10 for lecture locations, dates and times, and go to [royal-oak.org](http://royal-oak.org) to reserve your seat.



# Royal Oak's Heritage Circle: A Vital Group of Patrons

The historical and cultural ties that bind the United States and the United Kingdom are longstanding and deep-rooted. Forty-five years ago, this spirit of connection is what inspired the creation of the Royal Oak Foundation. The mission of the Foundation is to raise awareness and advance the work of the National Trust by inspiring support from the United States for the Trust's efforts to preserve and protect historic places and spaces – for ever, for everyone. Royal Oak members from around the country—which are more than 14,000 strong – identify with this close Anglo-American connection and express their commitment to the protection of historically significant buildings, gardens and treasures located throughout the U.K. by their generous contributions.

Royal Oak has seen substantial growth in Heritage Circle membership since establishing this group in 2006. Heritage Circle has four levels of engagement, with annual dues ranging from \$1,000 to \$10,000. (See the opposite page for more details on membership levels.) Heritage Circle membership allows Royal Oak to provide special access and services to supporters and to become a stronger financial partner of the National Trust. To help steward this group, Royal Oak recently created the Heritage Circle Leadership Committee. The committee's goals are to grow membership and to create new ways of building community, through more frequent events and better communications. Our primary purpose is to establish closer connections to the Trust.

To build community within the Heritage Circle, Royal Oak offers special access to culturally rich travel opportunities in the U.K., as well as to British-themed programs and events in cities across the United States. Two highly anticipated 2018 overseas cultural opportunities



Heritage Circle members at a June 2017 lunch hosted by Sir John Giffard at Chillington Hall in Staffordshire, his family's 18th-century Georgian country house designed by Sir John Soane.

are our *Garden and House Tour* and *Study Day*. The *Garden Tour* takes place May 30th-June 3rd and explores some of the great houses and gardens of Middle England, taking in the counties of Lincolnshire, Cambridge and Northamptonshire. Several featured houses welcome us for private tours as they are not open to the public. Our September 7th *Study Day* provides an exceptional opportunity to explore historic properties arranged by expert guide, James McDonough of Art Tours. Some Heritage Circle members are also invited for dinner with a distinguished speaker in London on September 6th. Details on this year's *Study Day* are available soon.

Exploring British culture in an American city is another part of the Heritage Circle experience. On May 4th -5th, Royal Oak visits Cleveland, Ohio. To start, Heritage Circle members enjoy an orientation and driving tour of Shaker Heights, a planned community based on principles of the 1890s "English Garden City Movement," featuring wonderful Tudor, Jacobean and Cottage style houses. Later that day, Royal Oak Board Director Eric Nilson hosts our group in his home for a champagne reception and talk about his exquisite collection of English porcelain teapots and garniture before enjoying a nearby dinner. On Saturday morning, Royal Oak member and Director and President of the Cleveland Museum of Art welcomes us for two curator-led tours: a private viewing of selected British drawings and a visit to the special exhibition titled *Eyewitness Views: Making History in 18th-Century Europe*. 🍷

If you are not a Heritage Circle member, we encourage you to become part of this special group of Royal Oak members. For additional details on joining and on the tours and trips, please visit our website at [www.royal-oak.org](http://www.royal-oak.org).

You may also contact Director of Development Greg Joye at (212) 480-2889 ext. 212 or [gjoye@royal-oak.org](mailto:gjoye@royal-oak.org).



Royal Oak Board Director Eric Nilson and his fine English porcelain teapots and garniture.





# THE ROYAL OAK FOUNDATION

Americans in Alliance with the National Trust of England, Wales and Northern Ireland

## MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

### BASIC ANNUAL MEMBERSHIPS (100% tax-deductible)

#### Individual \$80

- Free entry for one at National Trust sites open to the public in England, Wales & Northern Ireland
- Reciprocal free entry to National Trust for Scotland sites
- Subscriptions to the National Trust Magazine and Royal Oak Newsletter
- National Trust of England, Wales & Northern Ireland annual Handbook and Parking Pass
- Priority and reduced-price admission to U.S. programs, including lectures & day tours

#### Dual \$125

##### *All the benefits of INDIVIDUAL membership, plus:*

- Second member card for additional person living at the same address

#### Family \$150

##### *All the benefits of INDIVIDUAL membership, plus:*

- Two member cards for two adults living at the same address; each card also admits any children or grandchildren under the age of 21

#### Student/Young Professional (SYP) \$40

(For ages 13 to 29; date of birth and email required at time of payment)

##### *All the benefits of INDIVIDUAL membership, with the following adjustments:*

- Access to all publications in electronic format ONLY (includes National Trust Handbook and Magazine, and Royal Oak Newsletter and Program Brochure) on the Royal Oak website
- 30% discount on member's admission price at Drue Heinz Lectures for member and one guest (*limited SYP seats, early registration recommended*)

### SUPPORTING ANNUAL MEMBERSHIPS (100% tax-deductible)

#### Conservator \$200 | Art & Design \$250 | Sponsor \$500

##### *All the benefits of DUAL membership, plus:*

- Each member card admits TWO persons to National Trust properties in the U.K.
- Special Supporting-level members-only day tours and programs in the U.S.

- Priority registration for all Royal Oak lectures and programs in the U.S.
- Access to the National Trust's *Special Visits, Tours and Lectures* calendar of events

### HERITAGE CIRCLE ANNUAL MEMBERSHIPS (valid for two people)

#### Benefactor \$1,000 (\$850 tax-deductible)

##### *All the benefits of SUPPORTING membership, plus:*

- Complimentary admission for two to one Drue Heinz Lecture each program season (*total of 2 reservations each spring and fall*)
- Advance registration for all lectures (*limited availability*)
- Invitation to the annual Heritage Circle U.K. Study Day
- Access to the annual spring U.K. Garden & House Tour
- Gift book and *Apollo* magazine's "National Trust Historic Houses & Collections Annual"
- Access to the National Trust's quarterly *Arts, Buildings & Collections Bulletin*
- Special recognition in The Royal Oak Foundation Annual Report

#### Steward \$2,500 (\$2,230 tax-deductible)

##### *All the benefits of BENEFACTOR membership, plus:*

- Complimentary Student/Young Professional gift membership
- Complimentary admission for two to one additional Drue Heinz Lecture each program season (*total of 4 reservations each spring and fall*)

#### Guardian \$5,000 (\$4,730 tax-deductible)

##### *All the benefits of STEWARD membership, plus:*

- Invitation to a dinner with a Royal Oak lecturer (*per availability*)
- Invitation to the Guardian and Patron Dinner in conjunction with the annual Heritage Circle U.K. Study Day
- Invitation to the National Trust's calendar of bespoke, invite-only events in the U.K.

#### Patron \$10,000 (\$9,730 tax-deductible)

##### *All the benefits of GUARDIAN membership, plus:*

- Reservation facilitation for a VIP personalized tour of National Trust properties on request (*3 months advance notice necessary*)



### NATIONAL TRUST PARKING PASS 2018

Inside the front cover of the National Trust Handbook you will find the 2018 parking decal. The details that accompany the sticker instruct you to scan the QR code found on National Trust member cards to obtain free parking. These instructions do not pertain to Royal Oak member cards. Please continue to display the NT parking decal in the windshield of your car for free parking, and present your Royal Oak membership card for free admission to the sites.

By next year, when all Trust properties across the UK are set up to scan member cards at their car parks, Royal Oak member cards will have incorporated the proper QR coding that will make the parking decals obsolete. Until then, please rest assured that the 2018 parking sticker will be honored no matter which National Trust site you visit this year.

**Join Royal Oak today and become part of a community that both supports and enjoys the shared cultural heritage between Britain and the United States.**

Visit [www.royal-oak.org](http://www.royal-oak.org) for more information about The Royal Oak Foundation and membership levels, or call Jan Lizza at 212.480.2889, ext. 205.





Lindisfarne Castle (now a National Trust property) is a 16th century castle that became the country home of Edward Hudson, the proprietor of Country Life magazine. Edwin Lutyens, whose work was regularly promoted in the magazine, was hired by Hudson in 1901 to refurbish and alter the castle.

Photo courtesy of @National Trust Images/Joe Cornish

The Royal Oak Foundation seeks to raise awareness and advance the work of the National Trust of England, Wales, and Northern Ireland by inspiring support from the United States for the Trust's efforts to preserve and protect historic places and spaces – for ever, for everyone.



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The Royal Oak Foundation is an American not-for-profit charity 501(c)3 incorporated in the State of New York. Royal Oak's latest annual report may be obtained, upon request, from Royal Oak or from the Office of the Attorney General, Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271.