

[Press release: Rare early Georgian baby house at risk of leaving the UK](#)

A rare early Georgian baby house.

Arts Minister Michael Ellis has placed a temporary export bar on a rare Georgian baby house to provide an opportunity to keep it in the country.

The baby house (later known as a dolls' house) is at risk of being exported from the UK unless a buyer can be found to match the asking price of £65,000 (plus £13,000 VAT).

The house is a rare and magnificent example from the early 18th century, one of only around thirty surviving examples of pre-1760 English baby houses. It descended through the family of William Edward Forster, the Liberal MP who introduced the Education Act of 1870 and was later Chief Secretary for Ireland.

Jesse Burton's best-selling 2014 book "The Miniaturist" brought baby houses to renewed attention in recent years. The book was inspired by Petronella Oortman's famed baby house, on display at Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum. It was also made into a two-part BBC series, which aired over Christmas last year.

The concept of the miniature house came to England from the Netherlands and Germany in the early 18th century, and was intended for training the young daughters of wealthy families in household management. Miniature furniture, and utensils in silver, pewter and porcelain, were supplied by toy merchants, while girls were encouraged to develop sewing skills by making clothes for the house's dolls.

Due to their intricate and expensive design baby houses were more a training tool than a plaything for children until the early 19th century, when the design was simplified and production increased, resulting in the dolls' houses of more recent times.

Arts Minister Michael Ellis said:

This striking piece is a captivating window into the history of childhood. I hope it can remain in the UK, where it can be studied and admired further.

The decision to defer the export licence follows a recommendation by the [Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest \(RCEWA\)](#), administered by The Arts Council.

RCEWA member Peter Barber said:

This captivating and little altered house in miniature takes us into the elegant eighteenth century home while also shedding unique light on the education of young middle class girls at that time.

The RCEWA made its recommendation on the grounds of the house's outstanding significance for the study of the history and material culture of childhood.

The decision on the export licence application for the house will be deferred until 1 May. This may be extended until 1 August if a serious intention to raise funds to purchase it is made at the recommended price of £65,000 (plus £13,000 VAT).

Organisations or individuals interested in purchasing the house should contact the RCEWA on 0845 300 6200.

An image of the house can be downloaded via our [flickr site](#).

ENDS

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Notes to editors

1. Details of the house are as follows: Probably made between 1720 and 1740. Largely made of mahogany, oak and softwood, and with glazed windows, measuring 204cm high, 135cm wide, and 67cm deep. The maker and early provenance are not known. The piece is in good condition, with numerous small areas of damage and historic repairs, but with minimal losses.
2. Provenance: Possibly with Elizabeth and Sarah Forster at Grove House, Tottenham and thence by descent to; William Edward Forster and thence by descent to; Florence Vere O'Brien and thence by descent to; Elinor Wiltshire; sold to Christopher Gibbs Ltd; acquired by a private collection; Sold at Bonhams, London, 19 November 2009, lot 37 (£43,000 inc. prem.); sold at Sotheby's, London, 23 May 2017, lot 200, The Ballyedmond Collection Sale (37,500 inc. prem)
3. The Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest is an independent body, serviced by The Arts Council, which advises the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on whether a cultural object, intended for export, is of national importance under specified criteria.
4. The Arts Council champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. It supports a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries – from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections. www.artscouncil.org.uk

[News story: Programme: EU-UK Article 50 Negotiations, Brussels, 6-9 February 2018](#)

[unable to retrieve full-text content]UK and EU officials will hold further discussions next week

[News story: Captain Dean Sprouting has died](#)

Captain Dean Sprouting.

It is with regret that the MOD must announce the death of Captain Dean Sprouting of the Adjutant General's Corps at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, on 31st January 2018. He was serving with Black Watch, 3rd Battalion, Royal Regiment of Scotland. The incident is currently under investigation, but we can confirm that it was not the result of enemy activity.

Lt Col Rob Hedderwick, Commanding Officer, The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland, said:

It is hard to do justice to a man such as Dean Sprouting with simple words. In no time at all he had become an indispensable part of the battalion, not only for his professional expertise but also for his compassionate manner and camaraderie. His intelligence and sharp wit was apparent from the outset; there was an ever-present twinkle in his eye and he would gladly admit that his youth had been full of adventure.

Dean was simply one of those people whose infectious humour and enthusiasm drew others to him. His professional knowledge was second to none and his sage advice already something I had come to rely on. His loss is keenly felt by us all and our thoughts and prayers are with his wife and children whom I know he cherished more than anything else in this world. I am hugely proud and thankful to have known him. He was a very good man.

Warrant Officer Class One Tam Millsip, Visiting Warrant Officer, 51 Infantry Brigade said:

Dean's warm, personable nature was never diluted while conducting his duties and those who he had dealings with were always left smiling after Dean imparted his unique wisdom and outlook on life.

Dean was a tremendously entertaining man to be around. He would bring a great deal of joy and laughter to those around him often at the expense of himself; there was never a boring day spent with Dean and my thoughts go out to his family at this very sad time.

Minister for the Armed Forces Mark Lancaster said:

It is with deep regret that the Ministry of Defence confirms the death of Capt Dean Sprouting of the Adjutant General's Corps, who died earlier this week at Al Asad Air Base in Iraq. Our thoughts are with his family and friends at this very difficult time. An investigation is underway to establish the detail but it is not a result of enemy activity.

[Press release: Change of Her Majesty's Ambassador to Romania in August 2018](#)

Mr Andrew Noble LVO has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to Romania.

Mr Andrew Noble LVO has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to Romania in succession to Mr Paul Brummell CMG who will be transferring to another Diplomatic Service appointment. Mr Noble will take up his appointment in August 2018.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Full name: Andrew James Noble LVO

Married to: Helen Natalie Noble

Children: Four

2014 – 2017 Algiers, Her Majesty's Ambassador

2009 – 2013 Berlin, Deputy Head of Mission, Consul-General and Counsellor

(Political)

2007 – 2009 FCO, Director, Security and Estates

2005 – 2007 FCO, Director, Security

2001 – 2005 Athens, Deputy Head of Mission and Consul-General

1998 – 2001 FCO, Deputy Head, Security Policy Department

1994 – 1998 Cape Town/Pretoria, Head of Political Section

1991 – 1994 FCO, Desk Officer then Deputy Head, Security Co-ordination Department

1989 – 1991 FCO, Desk Officer, European Community Department

1987 – 1989 Bonn, Second Secretary (Bilateral relations and Foreign Policy)

1986 – 1987 Attachment to German Foreign Ministry

1983 – 1986 Bucharest, Third later Second Secretary (Political)

1982 Joined Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Further information

[Press release: UK and China sign Memorandum of Understanding on Medicine and Device Regulation](#)



CEO Ian Hudson met with Minister Bi in Beijing.

Dr Ian Hudson, Chief Executive of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the

China Food and Drug Administration (CFDA) during a visit to China this week.

This new signing expands on a previous MoU signed in 2014 which focussed on the exchange of safety information on medicines and medical devices to protect patients in the UK, China, and around the world.

Dr Ian Hudson, Chief Executive Officer at MHRA said:

China is a world leader in the market for raw materials for the pharmaceutical industry and closer collaboration with MHRA will support the promotion of innovation, good practice, and protect UK patients.

We operate in a global environment and formalising our international relationships helps strengthen regulatory systems to protect public health worldwide.

The MoU was signed in Beijing's Great Hall of the People with both Prime Minister Theresa May and China's Premier Li Keqiang present.

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