

*Household Inventories of Helmingham Hall: 1597–1741.* (Suffolk Records Society vol. 61). Edited by Moira Coleman. xxxvii + 342 pp., plates, appendices, glossary, bibliography, index. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2018. ISBN 978 1 78327 274. Price £35 hb.

Helmingham Hall has been the home of the Tollemache family for the last five hundred years. It was built as a Tudor moated house in 1510 to replace the former Creke Hall which was demolished after John Tollemache married Elizabeth Joyce in 1487. Originally from Avranches in Normandy, the Tollemaches arrived in Suffolk not long after the Norman Conquest and have resided in Suffolk ever since, firstly near Ipswich and subsequently at Helmingham. John Tollemache's descendants were upwardly mobile and rose from gentry to a baronetcy and finally to the earldom of Dysart. They also had large numbers of children, so the genealogical table provided at the beginning of the book is very necessary, especially as all the baronets were called Lionel!

The present volume is based upon four household inventories for the years 1597, 1626, 1708 and 1741. Having spent many years transcribing and analysing probate inventories, it is a quite different experience to examine household inventories. Valuations are key to probate inventories whereas household inventories have no valuations but set out household furnishings and goods room by room. Compiling an inventory of such a large house is an enormous task, more than 4500 items are recorded in the volume and over 1500 for the 1626 inventory. Many goods are described in considerable detail. Probate inventories are frustrating in this respect, for example, they will list just 'a clock', but these household inventories include not only the type of clock but even the maker so that we discover that Helmingham Hall had a pendulum clock made by Benjamin Gray, Watchmaker in Ordinary to George II. Paintings in the Great Hall are described in detail; a picture of four young ladies hand in hand in the 1708 inventory is easily identified, for it still hangs in the Hall over the fireplace. The volume helpfully produces a colour plate of this painting and another recorded picture also still in the

Great Hall, a full-length portrait of Sir Lionel Tollemache, the second baronet.

A benefit of having inventories covering a century and a half for the same property and for the same family is that changes over time can be analysed and this applies both to the rooms and to the goods. By 1708, the 'hall' has become the 'Great Hall'. There is also 'the room where Mr Bockenham lay', a reference to the Revd Anthony Bockenham, rector of Helmingham, whose refusal to take the oaths to King William and Queen Mary led to his resignation and subsequent employment at Helmingham Hall. He died in 1704 shortly before the 1708 inventory was taken. The contents of this room reveal that it was a bedroom. The 1741 inventory lists goods associated with the new caffeine drinks, tea and coffee. It records cups and saucers, kettles, a sugar dish and a 'teaboard'. It is no surprise to find these goods at Helmingham Hall, indeed they might have been expected in 1708. The gentry led the way in owning such goods but within a few years of the 1741 inventory, ownership had spread to most social groups amongst the 'middling sort'.

Two very extensive appendices in the volume cover the development of the Hall over the period of the inventories, and material relating to a second Tollemache property known as 'Lugdons', at Fakenham Magna. The volume also includes a very extensive glossary comprising more than a hundred pages which not only explains lesser-known terms, but also lists references to the goods which considerably aids analysis. For example, the entry for maps lists all maps recorded in the inventories by subject so that we note that the family owned maps of the world, Europe, Italy, England, Scotland and Suffolk. This facility is a boon for the researcher.

Moira Coleman has done a wonderful job in assembling the material together. The book will be essential reading for anyone who is interested in Helmingham Hall, the Tollemache family or in household inventories. It will also be of relevance to specialist researchers in furnishings, textiles and art. The book may also inspire a visit; the award-winning gardens of the Hall are open to the public and are spectacular. Whilst the Hall itself is not open, a visit to the gardens can be followed by a delicious lunch or cream tea in the Coach House.