

Travel and the country house: places, cultures and practices

University of Northampton, 15-16 September 2014

Keynote speakers include: Roey Sweet, University of Leicester, and Margot Finn, UCL

Travel has long played a vital role in shaping the country house, opening up horizons and exposing both house and owner to a variety of external influences. Travel impacted upon values, tastes, material culture and money, and helped to articulate the flow of ideas, information, goods and capital. The importance of the Grand Tour and Empire to the country house has long been recognised, but domestic tourism and travel for more mundane purposes – to visit family or friends, engage in political life or go to town – were also significant. In this conference, we wish to explore a wide range of travel experiences and consider how these impacted on the country house. How were travel choices made and how were impacts articulated? How did new influences mesh with existing tastes and goods? What impact did its status as a place to visit have upon the country house? And how do we communicate the importance of travel to those visiting country houses today?

We invite papers on all aspects of travel and the country house, but would especially welcome those which focus on:

- Geographies of travel: the Grand Tour, colonies and empire, and domestic and everyday travel
- The view from abroad: foreign visitors to British country houses
- Royal progresses and prodigy houses
- Travelling for business and pleasure: court and parliament; tours and spas
- Travel and material culture: how different places were brought into the country house, for example through objects
- Travel and taste: the impact of travel on architecture, collecting, design and material culture
- Visiting the country house: receiving guests and staying with friends or family
- The practicalities of travel: stables, coaches and horses; trains, ships and boats; servants and guides; accommodation, meals and sleeping
- Travel and publishing: journals, guidebooks and maps
- Travel as a theme in country house interpretation/presentation today.

If you would like to present a paper, then please send a 300 word abstract to Prof Jon Stobart:

jon.stobart@northampton.ac.uk by 19th May 2014.

