



FOUR SHIRES

# Antiques

## Unique table from Eynsham Hall discovered

Eynsham Hall was originally built for James Lacy in 1763 and it was later enlarged by the architect Charles Barry between 1843 and 1845 for the fifth Earl of Macclesfield, Thomas Parker. In 1866 the hall was owned by the copper mining magnate James Mason of Mason & Barry. Then in 1904 country pile was put in the hands of his son, James Francis Mason. Finally it was demolished in order to be rebuilt to the



designs of the architect Sir Ernest George (1839-1922). Eynsham Hall underwent most of its changes during Mason's ownership. James Mason commissioned the renowned architect Owen Jones to re-configure the building and design all of the interiors. Owen Jones was, and is still today, famous for the publication of his influential 'Grammar of Ornament' in 1856. This publication turned the world of decoration and interior design upside down. It set out ornaments into groups and formalised their use. This systematic approach changed the way everyday items were designed revolutionizing the

design process. For the furniture in Eynsham Hall, Jones used his favoured firm Jackson and Graham of Oxford Street, a firm that today is known for its extremely high exhibition quality cabinet making.

All of the hand drawn designs were donated to the Reading University Archive by descendants of James Mason and show all of the interior decoration of the copper magnate's country house. It was after previously studying these drawings that local specialist antique dealer Paul A. Shutler noticed the occasional table from the drawing room coming up for sale at auction in Cheshire.

As with so many English country houses during the 20th century the contents of the hall were dispersed. To date just six pieces are known to exist and they reside in the collection of the Victoria and Albert museum. The discovery of this unique occasional table brings the total to seven! Paul A. Shutler runs a high end specialist web based dealership from his home just outside Banbury, and includes clients from all corners of the world including museums, investors and private collectors. More information can be found at [www.invest-in-antiques.com](http://www.invest-in-antiques.com)

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• A portion of the complete watercolour of Eynsham Hall drawing room, courtesy of Reading University Library's Archive