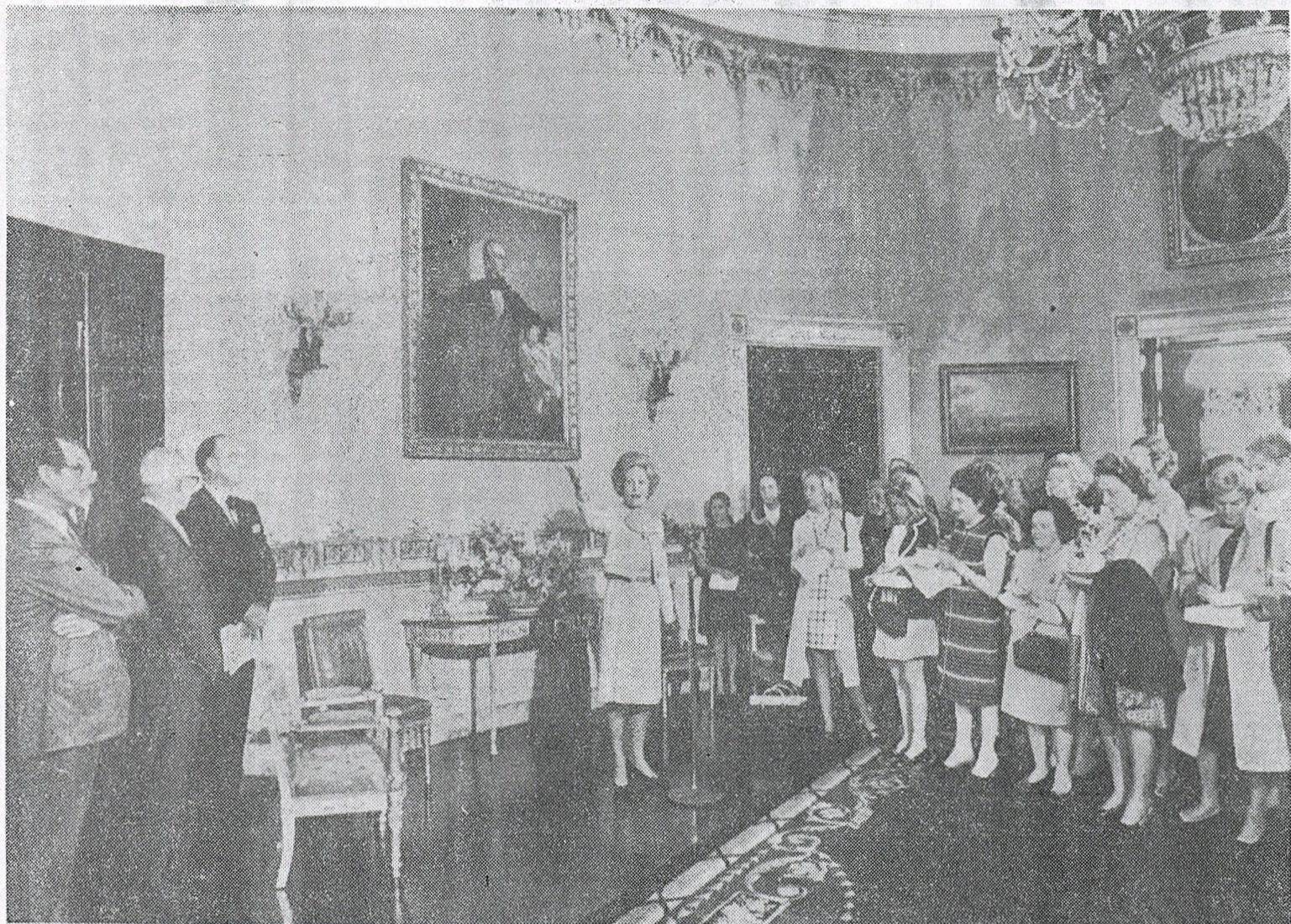


TUESDAY, MAY 16, 1972



United Press International

Pat Nixon speaks in the refurbished Blue Room.

Marking the Blue Room's Latest Look

The Room

By Sarah Booth Conroy

Mrs. Richard Nixon's redecoration of three White House State Rooms—estimated to cost \$650,000—is complete with the opening today to the public of the Blue Room.

Cost of the Blue Room alone is expected to be close to \$200,000. Most of the bill will be paid by Mrs. Joseph Neff of New York, a newspaper heiress and a member of the Committee for the Pres-

ervation of the White House.

The three reception rooms, which lie between the East Room and the State Dining Room of the White House, were last redecorated by Jacqueline Onassis, when John F. Kennedy was President.

The essential formality of the rooms has been retained, said White House curator Clement Conger. "We've upgraded the decoration and the furnishings to museum quality."

Conger said he was particularly pleased to remove from the Blue Room "that contraption"—a circle of

See BLUE, B3, Col. 7

The Reception

By Dorothy McCardle

First Lady Pat Nixon, after shaking the last hand of the 800 guests at a White House reception yesterday afternoon, turned glanced out the newly redecorated Blue Room windows and exclaimed over a rainbow spanning the Washington Monument.

She rushed closer to the windows and beckoned friends to join her, as though in wistful search of a good

omen at the end of a tragic day.

Then she made her own comments on what was in the minds and hearts of everyone — the shooting of Alabama Gov. George Wallace just two hours before in Laurel, Md.

"It's awful," said Mrs. Nixon. "It's such a shame. People are crazy to do such a thing when they can go to the ballot box and make their feelings known there."

President Nixon had planned to stand in the receiving line in the Blue Room with her to welcome all the donors who had given so much of their time, their

See ROOM, B3, Cl. 1

"Mrs. Nixon described the room as 'blue-blue, just as I said the Red Room is a true red. We wanted this room to be soft, in between the two strong rooms."

The Blue Room's Redecoration

BLUE, From B1

plywood on legs, draped as a table during the Kennedy era.

Unlike the Green and Red Room walls which are covered in fabric, the Blue Room has been wallpapered. The background is beige with a heavier picot (double-dot) design. The upper frieze has a flower and bowl design. The lower border is of pink flowers, gold cupids and blue Greek figures. The design is based on an 1800 French Directoire wallpaper, especially silk-screened for the White House.

Herbert Millard, an 87-year-old woodcarver from Roswell, Ga., cut the acanthus leaf mold for the new cornice and the oval plaster design in the center of the ceiling.

Conger said Mrs. Nixon had gone with him to look at plaster architectural details in houses of the same period, including Tudor House in Georgetown.

The room's style is French Empire, inspired by furnishings President James Monroe bought for the room in 1817. Four of the original Monroe chairs, made by the Paris cabinetmaker Pierre-Antoine Bellange, are still in the room.

The Blue Room has a new marble mantle, a close companion to the ones in the Red and Green Rooms (which were the original State Dining Room mantles). The Blue Room mantle is an early 19th-century white Carrara caryatid (female figure) with a Medusa-head center bordered with grapes.

Other acquisitions in the Blue Room are: a larger upholstered chair ordered by

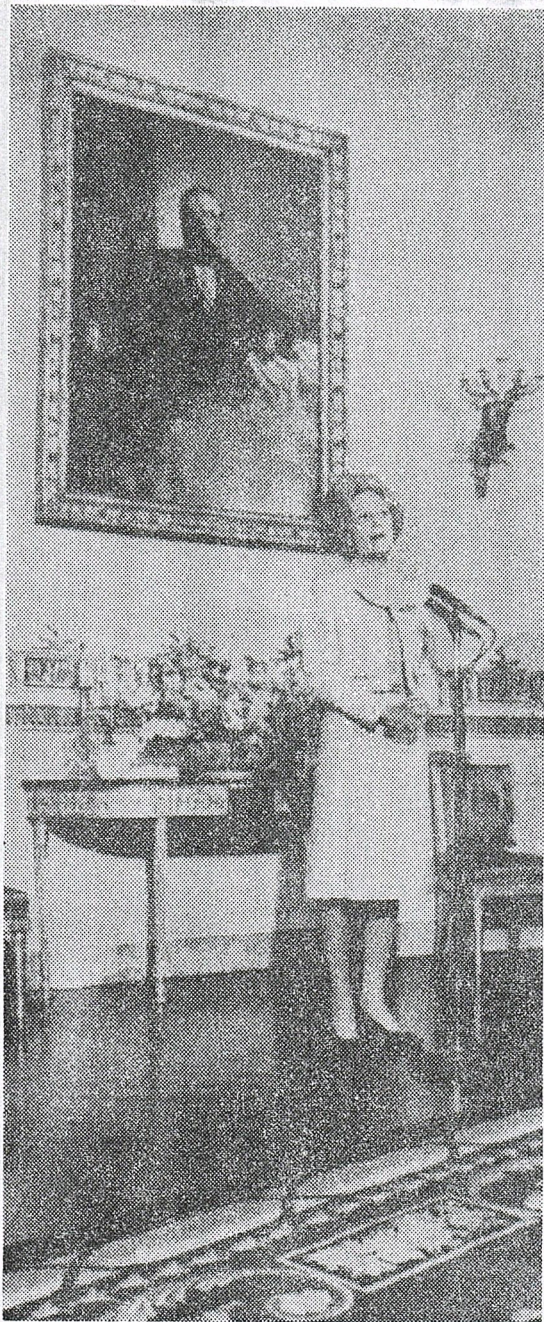
Monroe in France; a pair of English 18th-century console tables (on loan from the Corcoran); a portrait of Zachary Taylor; a cast-iron fire back circa 1812 with a design of four ovals; several Louis XVI console and occasional tables, a New York Federal vertical looking glass, much like the one Latrobe is said to have designed for the room; a pair of 18th-century Chinese export porcelain vases; two pairs of English argand lamps and an antique Savonnerie oblong rug.

The draperies in the room, designed as were the Green and Red Room hangings by David Byers III of Atlanta, Ga., are blue silk-faced satin. The valances are gold and blue with a fringe of gold, green and blue entwined.

Mrs. Nixon described the room as "blue-blue, just as I said the red room is a true red. We wanted this room to be soft, in between the two strong rooms."

She said the completion of the three reception rooms ends the decoration on the main floor. "We have to move upstairs, now." But Conger added that he has plans to "get rid of that red naugahyde on the chairs in the entrance hall and hang new draperies."

The Green Room, which cost about \$300,000 to redo, is in the classical American Sheraton style with several pieces of Duncan Phyfe furniture. The Red Room, which cost about \$150,000, is American Empire. The cost of refurbishing the Green Room was paid by the Richard King Mellon Foundation of Pittsburgh, the Red Room by the John Murchisons of Addison, Tex.



Associated Press

Mrs. Nixon in the newly opened Blue Room, which she says is decorated in "blue blue."

toral System'

willing to run for office."

Also attending the \$100-a-ticket reception were Transportation Secretary John Volpe and HUD Secretary George Romney and his wife, Lenore.

Sen. Hruska, a staunch foe of antigun legislation, said he expects no immediate outcry for further gun restrictions.

"Maryland has a gun law," the Nebraska senator said.

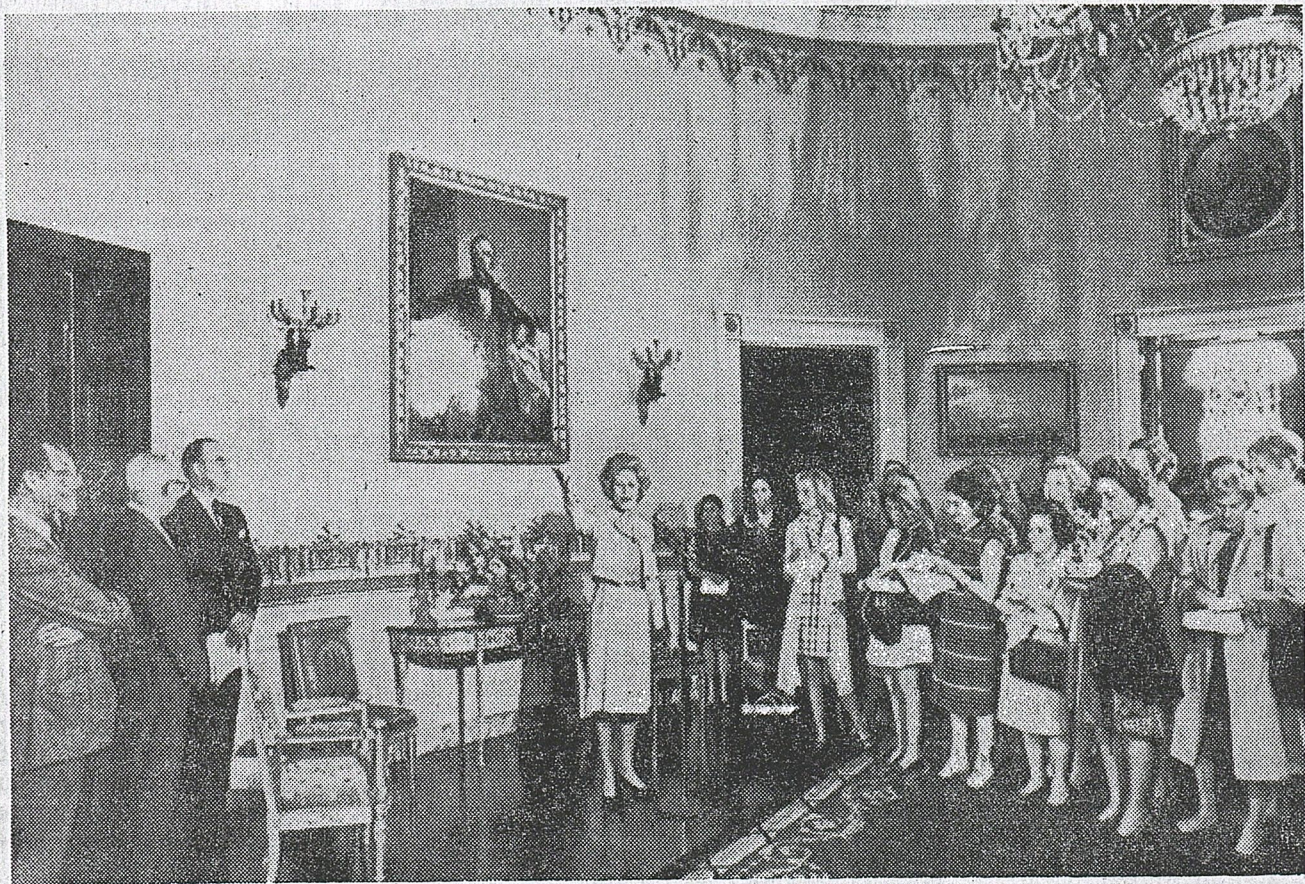
"Why didn't it work? Because you can't legislate gun control, that's why."

Sen. Allott, who faces reelection this year in Colorado, called "this outburst of violence the most serious, futile thing that has ever hit this city.

"I'm sick about it. It's not the American way. I just hope and pray the governor and the others recover," he said.

PRESERVATION COPY

[p. 2 of 2]



—United Press International Telephoto

Pat Nixon Officially Unveils Refurbished Blue Room in White House
...decor typifies early 19th Century era of President Monroe

Blue Room's a New Room at Opening, After \$300,000 Worth of Redecorating

By FRANCES LEWINE
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — President and Mrs. Nixon have given a big "thank you" party to mark the opening of the refurbished Blue Room and to salute everyone who helped with their three-year redecorating of the White House.

The Blue Room, redone at a cost of more than \$300,000, remains in the French Empire style, but it has beige wallpaper instead of cream striped silk and there are accents of French blue in an antique Savonnerie rug, satin draperies and chair upholstery.

Wallpaper is new for the room in this century. White House spokesmen said this beige double-dotted pattern with borders of cornucopia design was copied from an antique French Directoire wallpaper made in 1800.

THE WHOLE room now is said to be more typical of the early 19th Century when James Monroe was president.

There are new paintings, including a portrait of President Zachary Taylor, and new furnishings, including marblétopped French console

tables, and a 19th Century carved white-marble fireplace mantel topped by a gold vertical mirror.

The 1,000 guests gathered for the occasion all had some hand in the now-completed White House facelifting.

They ranged from museum advisers to donors who paid the bills and 87-year-old Herbert Millard of Atlanta, who carved the ornamental plaster cornices and ceiling centerpiece in the Blue Room.

THE WHITE House hasn't been redecorated since First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy redid it 10 years ago.

Mrs. Nixon said she hopes "this will last at least 10 years."

The Monday evening reception was somewhat dampened by news of the shooting of campaigning presidential candidate George C. Wallace.

President Nixon came to thank the contributors, but said he was returning to his office to check on Wallace's condition "which we all hope will be better."

He told the gathering the White House was not the largest or the grandest official residence in the world, but that most foreign visitors

find it has "a feeling of home, a personal touch" that makes it different.

THAT TOUCH, he said, was due to the individual gifts of furnishings and to First Ladies who worked on it.

Mrs. Nixon gave the Blue Room a sendoff with a 90-minute receiving line to

shake every hand.

Standing with the First Lady were Curator Clement Conger, a prime mover in the redecorating, and Mrs. Joseph Neff of New York City, who paid the Blue Room bills.

She wouldn't say exactly what it cost but put the figure at between \$300,000 and \$500,000.

PRESERVATION COPY

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Office of the Curator
May 15, 1972

THE BLUE ROOM

The Committee for the Preservation of the White House presents the newly refurbished Blue Room which has been closed since February 19, 1972 for a major restoration. The room was designed in the 1790's by the architect of the White House, James Hoban, to be the most elegant room in the White House.

The room retains the style of furnishings of the French Empire period with several pieces of furniture purchased by President James Monroe for the White House in 1817 remaining in the room. The architectural features, furnishings and details of the room approximate those that might have been in the Oval Room (Elliptical Salon; Blue Room) during the period of James Monroe (1817-1825). The present decorative features were executed to complement many of the original items of the Monroe period Oval Room.

The walls have been hung with wallpaper based on an antique French Directoire wallpaper made in 1800 under the supervision of Jacquemart & Benard. The paper for the Blue Room has been reproduced precisely from the period document. It was made in America by a silk screen process. The original document, the screens from which the paper was made and a duplicate set of the paper which has been made for replacement when necessary are all the exclusive property of the White House and may not be used elsewhere. The ground of the paper is beige with a picot (double dot) design. The frieze has an interesting Directoire design with cornucopia. The lower border complements the frieze at the cornice. The principal color in the border is blue with shades of green, pink and gold.

The precedent for paper in the Oval Room (Blue Room) dates from the administration of James Monroe in 1817 when the walls of the oval room were covered with "crimson 'flock' paper." Wallpaper continued in use in the room throughout the 19th century until the introduction of fabric on the walls in the late 1890's when William McKinley was President. There is a record of paper used in the White House prior to 1817. A recent gift to the White House was a sample of wallpaper which was in the possession of the family of Benjamin Latrobe, the architect who worked with Dolley Madison in refurbishing the White House from 1809-1814. Handwriting on the paper states "paper upon the drawing room of the President's House in Mr. Madison's time." In the first quarter of the 19th century, American homes had walls which were painted or papered off white, buff or beige in color to be light appearing by day and particularly by night due to the use of candles or oil lamps. The draperies and upholsteries provided the color in the room.

The color blue was first introduced into the oval room in 1837 in the administration of Martin Van Buren. Blue has been the predominate color in the room since then with various shades of blue in evidence throughout the years.

The draperies in the Blue Room are blue silk faced satin with gold satin valances and hand woven blue fringe. The blue fabric blends with the colors in the borders of the wallpaper. The design for the draperies is based on a design in a French period document of the early 19th century entitled "Collection de Meubles et Objets de Gout" (1802-1835) by Pierre de la Mésangère. The draperies were approved by Mr. Edward Vason Jones, Consulting Architect to the Committee for the Preservation of the White House and designed by Mr. David Richmond Byers, III, Atlanta, Georgia. They were made by the W. E. Browne Decorating Company, Atlanta.

The upholstery on the chairs is the same color blue as the draperies. The backs of the chairs have a design of an American eagle adapted from the Great Seal of the United States. The eagle is facing his right with olive branches and arrows in his talons.

There are several new architectural features to be found in the room. The cornice is completely new in design based on the precedent of plaster work of 1817 found in the District of Columbia and nearby Virginia and Maryland. It is more restrained than some plaster work of this period due to the influence of the architect Benjamin Latrobe and the use of reproduction ornamental wallpaper with the frieze below. In the center of the ceiling is an oval design based on ornamental plaster work done in Washington, D. C. and its environs in 1815. It combines an oval fluted fan within an oval moulded acanthus leaf motif as repeated in the frieze of the wallpaper and in the early 19th century French carved gilt wood chandelier. (the previous centerpiece was circular and made of paper mache, not plaster). The cornice and ornamental plaster work were designed by Mr. Edward Vason Jones, Albany, Georgia.

The Committee for the Preservation of the White House met in November, 1970, June 1971 and finally in September 1971 to discuss and approve the changes in the Blue Room.

All expenses incurred in the refurbishing and acquisitions, with the exception of individual gifts as noted, are being borne by Mrs. Joseph Neff, New York, New York. Mrs. Neff is a member of the Committee for the Preservation of the White House.

Office of the Curator
May 15, 1972
CEC/BM

ITEMS FROM THE WHITE HOUSE COLLECTION REMAINING
IN THE BLUE ROOM

SET OF FRENCH EMPIRE CHAIRS

Four of these chairs, two arm and two side chairs, are part of the original set of furniture ordered for the Oval Room (Blue Room) by President James Monroe in 1817. They were made by the Parisian cabinetmaker, Pierre-Antoine Bellange. The additional eleven chairs are reproductions made in 1962 to match the original chairs. The original chairs were gifts in 1961, 1962 and 1963 from Miss Catherine Bohlen, Villanova, Pennsylvania
An anonymous donor

The National Society of Colonial Dames of the 17th century.
The reproduction chairs were a gift in 1961 from Mr. Charles Francis Adams, Dover, Massachusetts.

PAIR OF FRENCH EMPIRE TORCHERES

Made in France about 1810, these torcheres of bronze and bronze-dorè are composed of statues of female classical figures mounted on a triangular base. Each figure holds aloft a gilt globe with arms holding candles.
Anonymous gift to the White House in 1962.

SET OF FOUR FRENCH EMPIRE WALL SCONCES

These wall sconces or "appliques" are of bronze-doré. They are formed of griffen heads holding candle arms. Made in France about 1810, the sconces were a gift to the White House in 1961 from an anonymous donor.

PAIR OF FRENCH PORCELAIN VASES

Made by Sevres, circa 1800, this pair of blue and gilt porcelain vases was purchased for Card Room (present Green Room) by James Monroe in 1817. Each vase is decorated with painted scenes of Passy, the home of Benjamin Franklin near Paris while he was United States Minister to France.

NEW ACQUISITIONS IN THE BLUE ROOM

BERGERE ORDERED BY MONROE IN 1817 FOR THE BLUE ROOM

During the restoration project of the Kennedy Administration four of the original chairs made by Pierre-Antoine Bellange and ordered by President Monroe from France in 1817 for use in the "elliptical drawing room" were returned to the room. An additional chair from this set has now been located and placed in the room. It is one of the two larger bergeres which President Monroe ordered for use by the President and the First Lady. Its proportions are somewhat larger than the other arm chairs. The sides of the chair have been upholstered as is appropriate to a bergere. The bergere is an anonymous gift to the White House in March, 1972 and is shown for the first time.

PAIR OF ENGLISH CONSOLE TABLES IN THE FRENCH MANNER

This extremely rare and very beautiful pair of 18th century English console tables has been placed on loan from the W. A. Clarke Collection at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington. The tables, which are dated circa 1785-1790, have satinwood tops with revetted corners. The top of each table is cross-banded with palisander wood and has a cream-colored border with a floral pattern in muted natural colors. The frieze on the apron of the table is carved and gilded on a white ground in bas relief with cornucopiae (coordinating with the cornucopiae on the looking glass), arrows, quivers,

and laurel wreaths in gilt on a white ground. At the center of the apron is a panel painted with figures in the classical style in the Pergolesi-Cipriani manner, similar to the classical figures in the border of the wallpaper. The table is supported by four fluted and tapered legs with square blocked capitals decorated with gilt acanthus leaf motifs and terminating in flat "penny" feet. There is every indication that the design is by Robert Adam. The tables were most likely executed by a Huguenot craftsman in England, explaining the French influence in the details of the table. The tables were originally made for the Marquis of Stratford, son of the Duke of Sutherland. They are of exceedingly good quality and represent the finest craftsmanship of the period.

PORTRAIT OF ZACHARY TAYLOR BY WILLIAM GARL BROWN, 1847

This bust portrait of Zachary Taylor in uniform was painted by William Garl Brown, circa 1847, two years before Taylor became President. Brown painted this portrait in Mexico as a model for the Mexican War medals. It is a gift of Mr. and Mrs. Hubbard Buckner, Louisville, Kentucky.

EARLY 19TH CENTURY MARBLE MANTEL

This early 19th century mantel is made of white Carrara statuary marble. The supports of the mantel are formed of stylized caryatids. The frieze is carved with a head whose hair extends to become grape vines laden with fruit. The facings and the hearth are plain white marble. The mantel was originally in a home in New York. It is closely related to and of the same period as the Monroe era mantels in the Green and Red Rooms.

The mantel in the Blue Room previously was installed during the Theodore Roosevelt Administration. The mantel was too high and too wide for the proper balance in the room. The mantel is temporarily in storage. It may be re-placed in the White House.

CAST IRON FIRE BACK

This cast iron fire back was made circa 1812 and signed by Mark Richards, Philadelphia. Richards owned several foundries in New Jersey and Pennsylvania and has signed this fireback at the center. The fireback is uniquely fashioned with four ovals fluted in sunbursts with a floral motif at the center. It has been placed in the Blue Room to correspond with the shape of the room. The fireback is a gift of Mr. and Mrs. Edward V. Jones of Albany, Georgia, in memory of their daughter Nella Vason Jones.

PAIR OF LOUIS XVI CONSOLE TABLES

A pair of very finely carved and gilded Louis XVI demi-lune console tables have been placed at the north end of the room. The two elaborately carved square legs are joined by a semi-circular stretcher on which is mounted an urn holding gilded flowers and leaves. The tables, which have gray and peach marble tops, are attributed to the craftsmanship of Georges Jacob. Console tables were very rarely signed as they were part of the room design and hence done by the same artisan. The tables were made in France in the late 18th century.

TWO LOUIS XVI CONSOLE TABLES

These two deeply carved and gilded console tables are supported by two square legs resting on plain graduated plinths. The pierced apron is formed by carved rosettes surrounded by leaf-scrolled motifs mounted on a plain molding with beading. These tables have brecciated marble tops in tones of sienna, tan and gold. The tables are French, 18th century. The tables have been placed on the piers between the windows.

OVERMANTEL VERTICAL LOOKING GLASS

A New York Federal vertical looking glass with an eglomise panel has been placed above the fireplace. It is surmounted by a spread wing black eagle and crossed cornucopia at the center and a classical urn with a flame finial on either side. Its pilasters are against mirror panels. It is known that Benjamin Latrobe designed a vertical overmantel mirror for the Blue Room and that Monroe ordered such a mirror from France for his "elliptical drawing room". in 1817.

PAIR OF LOUIS XVI OCCASIONAL TABLES

A pair of very fine Louis XVI acajou and brass mounted occasional tables made in France in the late 18th century have been placed in the grouping of furniture in front of the fireplace. The tops of red, gray and white marble have pierced brass galleries as do the lower mahogany shelves. The tables are rectangular with the shorter sides outcurved. The apron and its drawer are inset with brass beading.

LOUIS XVI GUERIDON

A very fine Louis XVI gilt bronze gueridon has been placed on the west wall. The round top with bronze molding at the edges is supported by three double bronze gilt legs with widely separated ring turnings. The gueridon has a three-cornered base. It is stamped by A. Weisweiler.

PAIR OF CHINESE EXPORT PORCELAIN VASES, 18TH CENTURY

A beautiful pair of Chinese export porcelian vases has been placed on the console tables. The vases show a palace in a garden in a gilt reserve panel against a turquoise blue "chicken skin" ground. Dragon figures form the handles of the vases.

PAIR OF ENGLISH ARGAND LAMPS

This pair of late 18th century English crystal argand lamps has a diamond cut glass globe base and top. The lamps have been placed on the consoles on the east wall.

PAIR OF ENGLISH ARGAND LAMPS

This pair of late 18th century English cut glass and brass argand lamps has been placed on the consoles on the west wall. Crystal pendants hang from a circular cut glass plate over a circular cut glass base. The central shaft is brass. The chimney is frosted glass on the bottom and partially cut on the top.

ANTIQUÉ SAVONNERIE RUG

This antique French Savonnerie rug of midnight blue has an oval central medallion with a sunburst effect conforming to the ovals of the fireback. The outer border is black while the inner border is gold. Acanthus leaf scrolls and rosette patterns face the inner border. At each corner is a classical open wreath design with an urn and a floral arabesque at the center. These urns are similar to the urns in the border of the wallpaper. The rug is dated circa 1860, but it is copied from a design of the Napoleonic era (1804-1815). The gold inner border is formed of a motif of reeds bound together with ribbon symbolizing the order of the court. This motif is often used in period frames. A variation on this motif is used in the frame on the portrait of Andrew Jackson by Jarvis in the Blue Room.

Office of the Curator

May 15, 1972

CEC and CJH

ITEMS FROM THE WHITE HOUSE COLLECTION NOW PLACED IN THE BLUE ROOM

FRENCH EMPIRE CHANDELIER

Of gilt wood and cut glass, this chandelier dates from 1815-1820. The gilt acanthus leaves in the chandelier are the same motif as the acanthus leaves in the ornamental plaster work in the Blue Room. This chandelier, made in France, was a gift to the White House in 1962 from Mr. J. Lloyd Hyde, New York, New York. It hung previously in the East Sitting Hall.

FRENCH EMPIRE MANTEL CLOCK

Part of the large order of French furnishings purchased by Monroe in 1817, this bronze-dorè clock bears the figure of Hannibal, the Carthaginian general. The case of the clock is the work of the noted French bronze-casters Deniere et Matelin who made other objects purchased for the White House in 1817. Located for many years in the Green Room, this clock replaced the "Minerva" clock on the mantel. The "Minerva" clock is now in the Green Room.

PAIR OF FRENCH PORCELAIN URNS

Made in France in the early 19th century, these gilt and white porcelain covered urns are decorated with delicate floral motifs around the center. They were previously in the Second Floor Corridor.

Gift to the White House in 1962 from Mr. Nicolas Feuillette, New York, New York.

MARBLE TOP TABLE

Purchased in 1817 by President Monroe, this mahogany circular table has bronze-dore mounts. Its three columnar legs rest on a triangular base. Previously in the East Sitting Hall.

PAIR OF BRASS ANDIRONS

Made in New York, circa 1800, these andirons have elliptical cup turned finials and claw and ball feet.

Gift in 1971 from Dr. Robert W. McDermott, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

PAIR OF BOUILLOTTE LAMPS

Made in France about the end of the 18th century, these lamps are Louis XVI in style with bronze arms. The green tole shades are not identical.

Gift to the White House in 1963 from Mr. John Loeb, New York, New York.

CHINESE EXPORT PORCELAIN BOWL

Made in China about 1770 this bowl is decorated in the famille rose style. On the outer side of the bowl are figures of Chinese people in a garden playing checkers.

CHINESE EXPORT PORCELAIN BOWL

This circular Chinese export porcelain punch bowl decorated in the famille rose style was made in China, circa 1760.

Office of the Curator
May 15, 1972
CEC and BM

PAINTINGS IN THE WHITE HOUSE COLLECTION IN THE BLUE ROOM

OIL PORTRAIT OF THOMAS JEFFERSON by Rembrandt Peale painted in Philadelphia in 1800 when Jefferson was Vice-President. This portrait was one of two likenesses of Jefferson which became his popular image among Americans and Europeans in the early 19th century. Jefferson was so pleased with the portrait he ordered a copy made for himself from the artist. Formerly in the Blue Room. Gift to the White House in 1962 from Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, Upperville, Virginia.

OIL PORTRAIT OF JOHN TYLER by George P. A. Healy believed to have been painted in 1859. This is one of the finest paintings in the White House. It is one of several Presidential portraits in the White House painted by Healy after Congress commissioned portraits of Presidents for the White House in 1857. Formerly in the Family Dining Room, 1st floor. Purchased by the Government for the White House.

OIL PORTRAIT OF ANDREW JACKSON by John Wesley Jarvis painted on a wood panel. Jackson is seen wearing a military uniform. It was painted from life in 1819. Formerly in the Blue Room. Gift to the White House in 1963 from Mr. and Mrs. Gerard B. Lambert, Princeton, New Jersey, direct descendents of the artist.

OIL PORTRAIT OF JOHN ADAMS attributed to Edgar Parker after Gilbert Stuart. Not a life portrait, this painting came to the White House in 1878, the year in which it was painted. Formerly in the Blue Room. Note: Early in July 1972, a life portrait of John Adams painted by John Trumbull in Philadelphia in 1793 will be placed on loan to the White House for the Blue Room through the generosity of Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts. The painting is on exhibition in the Fogg Art Museum and was formerly shown in Adams Hall, Harvard College.

PORTRAIT OF GEORGE WASHINGTON by Rembrandt Peale is in the porthole style. Oval portraits were originally intended to be shown over doorways or up high in a room. This is one of several similar portraits of Washington painted by Peale. The White House portrait was done after his death in 1823. Formerly in Yellow Oval Room. Gift to the White House in 1962 from Mrs. John Howells, Weston, Massachusetts.

SEASCAPE PAINTING entitled "A View of Boston Harbor" painted by Fitz Hugh Lane in 1854. This painting hung in the Yellow Oval Room. Gift to the White House in 1963 from Mr. and Mrs. Lew Wasserman, Universal City, California.

SEASCAPE PAINTING entitled "Baltimore Harbor" painted by Fitz Hugh Lane in 1850. This work is one of two known paintings done by the artist south of New York. Placed on loan to the White House by Mr. Sheldon Arpad, Washington, D. C.

OIL PORTRAIT OF JAMES MONROE by Gilbert Stuart
This very important portrait is one of a set of five portraits of early Presidents painted by Stuart about 1818-1820. The head is a replica of the life portrait of Monroe painted by Stuart in Boston in 1817. Critics consider this the finest painting of Monroe in existence today. It seems appropriate therefore to show this painting in the Blue Room of the Monroe era. On loan from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

Office of the Curator
May 15, 1972
CEC and BM

LOCATION CHANGES IN PORTRAITS AND OBJECTS
IN THE WHITE HOUSE

The portrait of John Quincy Adams by George P. A. Healy which was in the Blue Room has been moved to the Family Dining Room on the first floor. It replaces the portrait of Tyler.

The portrait of Alexander Hamilton by John Trumbull which was located in the Cross Hall has been placed on the west wall of the Red Room. It replaces the portrait of Monroe.

The portrait of Martin Van Buren by Francis Alexander which was in the Blue Room has been moved to the Cross Hall. It replaces the portrait of A. Hamilton.

In the Green Room has been hung a newly acquired landscape painting by George Inness entitled "The Rainbow in the Berkshire Hills." It was painted in 1869 and is the first Inness acquired for the permanent White House Collection. A gift in 1972 from Mr. Taft B. Schreiber, Universal City, California.

The gilt wood French empire table made by Pierre-Antoine Bellange which was previously in the Blue Room has been moved to the Entrance Lobby. It was moved from the room because of its size. Since the extra doors were opened in the Blue Room in the later part of the 19th century, the table has been out of scale there. On the table is the marble bust of George Washington after Cerracchi's model. It was purchased by Monroe in 1817 from the son of Washington's secretary.

Office of the Curator
May 15, 1972
CEC and BM

The Blue Room: Restored Again To Its 1817 Style

By JUDY HARKISON

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON—In the summer of 1814, when the United States was at war with Great Britain, and enemy troops were drawing close to Washington, Dolley Madison sat alone in the White House listening to the sound of the cannons.

"At this late hour," she wrote her sister, "a wagon has been procured. I have had it filled with the plates and most valuable portable articles belonging to the house. Whether it will reach its destination, the Bank of Maryland . . . events must determine."

That night British troops marched through the Capital and set the White House afire. Except for the exterior walls, it was totally destroyed. But a new executive mansion was constructed immediately for the next President, James Monroe.

For the first time in history, the décor of the White House state rooms has been restored to the style original to the mansion in 1817. Although Mrs. John F. Kennedy had redecorated, the wear and tear of millions of visitors left the rooms threadbare when President and Mrs. Nixon moved in.

The oval-shaped Blue room, the most elegant room of the White House, used frequently for small receptions, has been returned to the French furnishings and detail of the days of President Monroe. "The plaster ornaments there before were not architecturally correct," explained Edward Vason Jones, a Georgia architect who designed the restoration. "They were catalogue copies of things—the type of thing I call theater ornaments."

For authenticity, Mr. Jones turned to the same source used by Thomas Jefferson and other leading architects of the day—standard design books published in Europe and America. He has a large personal collection. "I've been researching early architecture for 40 years," said Mr. Jones, 63 years old, a man of outer reserve and inner intensity. "That's all I do, night and day. Sometimes I sit up all night and read."

For the Blue Room, Mr. Jones did a cornice mold-

ing and an ornamental plaster ceiling oval, both with an acanthus leaf motif. The carving itself was done by his 88-year-old woodcarver back in Georgia one of four craftsmen he employs.

Mr. Jones insists they do better work than the craftsmen of 150 years ago. "Why? Why? Because I trained them," he declared. "They are very meticulous and precise." As a young man, he taught himself to do the handwork.

With candles and oil lamps in use, American homes in the early 1800's had walls of white or beige that would reflect light. So the wallpaper used in the Blue Room is a beige with a picot (double dot) design, with a frieze and border of blue. It was reproduced from a fragment of paper (about six by eight feet mounted on canvas) from a French chateau, which Mr. Jones spotted in the shop of a New York decorator.

The Committee for the Preservation of the White House purchased the sample and had it reproduced by a silk screen process. Then the Committee purchased the screens, so that pattern can never be reproduced.

Since the walls are light, colors in the Blue Room are achieved by draperies—blue silk-faced satin with gold satin valances—and furnishings—French Empire chairs of blue and gold, four of which were part of the original set ordered for the room by President Monroe in 1817. A white marble mantel in the Blue Room was found in a home in lower Manhattan. It was nearly identical to two mantels bought in Italy by Monroe, which are in other rooms of the White House.

Once called the Oval Room and the Elliptical Salon, the Blue Room has been "blue" since 1837 and now its destiny seems clear. "Because it has been blue for 100



The New York Times/George Tames

years we keep it blue — what can you do?" shrugged Clement Conger, the affable and energetic White House curator who has been rounding up the country's best period furnishings for both the White House and State Department salons.

In fact, Mr. Conger is known to his associates as the "Grand Acquisitor." The "Grand Acquisitor," who works out of a cramped, old kitchen in the White House basement, has successfully wheedled millions of dollars worth of furniture and art from museums and private collections. He calls it "a hunt and peck game."

Mr. Conger is a former deputy chief of protocol (and descendant of Martha Washington) who one morning found himself summoned to the White House. He and

Mr. Jones had been working to refurbish the State Department diplomatic entertaining rooms, and the Nixons liked what they saw.

The White House restoration has been in progress two years. "I work on it when I can, but I still have to make a living," said Mr. Jones. "I'm contributing this to the United States Government. I'm delighted to do it. The State Department wanted to pay me, but I wouldn't accept it."

A leading authority on period restorations, Mr. Jones has done houses in towns all over the United States. He created the 19th-century rooms in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and his craftsmen are now restoring a New York Federal House in Goshen, N. Y., for Barry Tracy, curator of the Metro-

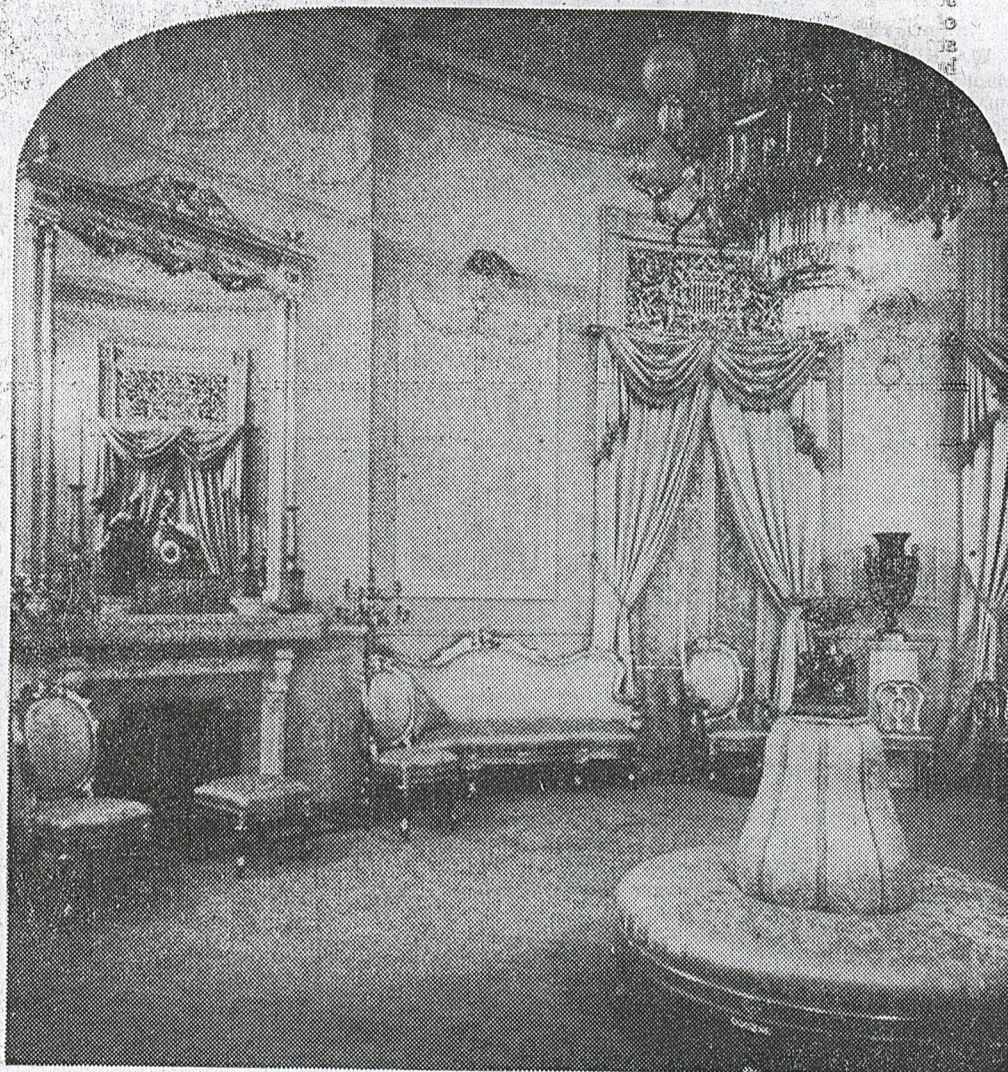
politan's American wing.

The architect's own home in Albany, Ga., is a spacious Greek Revival structure built by his family in 1850. It is furnished in the period 1815 to 1820, which he collects.

The job of doing over the Blue Room was a rushed project. "We tear the room up, and five weeks later it had to be reopened. I had a heart attack from the pressure," he said. Mr. Jones's heart attack occurred, in fact, while he was standing in the room discussing details with Mrs. Nixon. Ashen, he managed to return to the curator's office and a secretary summoned the White House doctor and oxygen.

Two other state rooms on the White House first floor —the Red and Green Rooms

The White House's Blue Room has undergone many changes through the years. Below, its appearance at the turn of the century. Left, Clement Conger, White House curator, and Edward Vason Jones, the architect, confer in the room as it looks today.



—have also been restored to the style of 1817. Covering the walls of the Red Room is a red twill satin fabric of "Dolley Madison Red," the background color in a Gilbert Stuart portrait of the First Lady that hung in the room in 1813, the year before the British burned the White House. For the first time, the portrait has been returned to its original position, through a loan by The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.

• "Mrs. Nixon was the first occupant to return something important to the White House after the fire," said Mr. Conger. Lesser items have been finding their way back through the years, like President Madison's medicine chest that was returned in 1939 by a Canadian descendent

of a British soldier who carried it off in 1814.

With a million and a half guests a year, the Executive Mansion is the world's most visited house. According to the curator, it is the only residence of a chief of state open to the public on a regular basis. (Monday through Friday, guests with Congressional passes are admitted from 8 A.M. to 10 A.M., and the public lines up at the East Gate from 10 A.M. to noon.)

"The Nixons have done more to upgrade the White House than anyone else since the Madison-Monroe days," Mr. Conger said. And for the first time, he said, the President's wife doesn't have to worry about paying the bills. (No Government funds are available for decorating; a reference to this appears

in the play "The Last Days of Mrs. Lincoln").

Several members of the Committee for the Preservation of the White House have underwritten costs — such as an estimated \$225,000 for the Blue Room by Mrs. Joseph Neff of New York, and \$300,000 for the Green Room by the Richard King Mellon Foundation of Pittsburgh.

In addition, the White House Historical Association receives royalties from the Franklin Mint, a private Philadelphia company, from the sale of presidential medals. Mr. Conger said that revenue from the sale of First Lady medals alone in two years amounted to \$250,000.

"The Presidents' Medals will bring in even more," he said hopefully.

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