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# Rossetti, Poynter and two bookcases commissioned by John Jones at the Victoria and Albert Museum

by MAX DONNELLY

IN DECEMBER 1893 the architect Charles Forster Hayward (1831–1905) sat in the Arts Club in Hanover Square drafting a letter to the editor of the *Magazine of Art*: ‘Sir – In the Jones’ Collection at the S.[outh] K.[ensington] Museum are some Cabinets designed by me for my late friend Mr John Jones from time to time – with all the care required by the taste & without stint of the money of my client’.<sup>1</sup> Jones had died in 1882, bequeathing to what is now the Victoria and Albert Museum his extensive collection of largely seventeenth- and eighteenth-century French fine and decorative arts, along with a series of modern ‘cabinets’ which were, in fact, bookcases. Hayward continued:

being of oak & therefore dissimilar from the other furniture of the Collection [. . .] they do not appear in the Jones’ Gallery – but are in glass cases [. . .] at the Library Entrance under a label of ‘I’ Hayward – which mistake I am seeing corrected. One of these two Cabinets – was decorated for me [. . .] by Dante Gabriel Rossetti [*sic*] his own ideas. Without more than a chat over it with me when I took him the panels & showed my designs for the work then in hand. So they are specially valuable. Another cabinet [had] a few heads [. . .] designed [. . .] by a most Eminent painter now Connected with this Museum intimately.<sup>2</sup>

Unfortunately, the editor, M.H. Spielmann, apparently declined Hayward’s offer of an illustrated article on these Gothic Revival bookcases (Figs. 35 and 38), and since then they have received little attention, with the notable exception of an article by Simon Swynfen Jervis published in 1972.<sup>3</sup>

The present article re-examines the bookcases in the light of

new evidence discovered in an archive of Hayward’s papers.<sup>4</sup> This includes letters, previously unrecorded, by D.G. Rossetti (1828–82) and Edward John Poynter (1836–1919) – the ‘Eminent painter’ Hayward referred to in his letter – as well as Poynter’s designs for the top of one of the bookcases. The documentation reveals that the Poynter and Rossetti bookcases had a complex and often fraught genesis, and further illuminates the character and taste of Jones, about whom little is known.<sup>5</sup>

Jones, a military tailor, probably met Hayward at the Benevolent Institution for the Relief of Aged and Infirm Journeyman Tailors at Haverstock Hill, Hampstead, in the late 1850s; from 1854 Hayward made alterations to the institution’s buildings, including the chapel that Jones, a regular churchgoer, attended.<sup>6</sup> Jones commissioned Hayward to design four bookcases for his chambers above his business premises at 6 Regent Street, and they were made between c.1858 and 1863 by John Howard & Sons of Berners Street.<sup>7</sup> The first (c.1858; Victoria and Albert Museum, London) was of double height and made to contain the prize works in Jones’s library, copies of Shakespeare’s first three Folios (1623–64).<sup>8</sup> Three low carved oak bookcases followed; the first (1859; private collection) was elaborately carved but has no painted decoration, and was not part of the Jones Bequest.<sup>9</sup> It was followed by the bookcase painted and partly designed by Poynter (1860–61; Fig. 35) and, finally, that painted by Rossetti (1862–63; Fig. 38).

Talented, but not destined to achieve fame, the young Hayward fraternised with members of London’s most advanced architectural circle. In February 1859 he attended a meeting chaired by the critic John Ruskin at which Venice was

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<sup>1</sup> Draft of letter from Hayward to the editor of Cassell’s *Magazine of Art*, 1st December 1893; Lingfield, Hayward History Centre (cited hereafter as HHC), HM/056/HAYWARD, C.F.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> S. Jervis: ‘Gothic at No. 95 Piccadilly: New Light on the Taste of John Jones’, *Apollo* 95 (March 1972), pp.206–11. Jervis, completely accurately as it transpires, proposed that the four bookcases in the series were made between c.1858 and 1862, and attributed the side panels of two of them to Poynter and Rossetti respectively. See also W. Maskell: *Handbook of the Jones Collection in the South Kensington Museum*, London 1883, pp.34 and 43, and C. Handley-Read: ‘England 1830–1901’ in H. Hayward, ed.: *World Furniture: An Illustrated History*, London 1965, p.215, and fig.809.

<sup>4</sup> The documents are held in the archive of the Hayward History Centre, The Guest House, Lingfield, Surrey. Hayward restored the late fifteenth-century Guest House in 1896–97, living there until his death. In 1930 the house was inherited by his son, Arthur Baldwin Hayward, who bequeathed it to Surrey County Council in 1954.

<sup>5</sup> The most detailed accounts of John Jones are in Maskell, *op. cit.* (note 3), and D. Sutton: ‘A Born Virtuoso’, Editorial, *Apollo* 95 (March 1972), pp.156–61.

<sup>6</sup> Hayward’s career is outlined in his obituary in *The Builder* 89 (15th July 1905), p.72. In the early 1850s he attended the Royal Academy Schools in London as well as studying Romanesque and Gothic architecture on the Continent. He worked as an assistant in the offices of the Gothic Revival architects Philip Hardwick (1792–1870) and his son Philip Charles Hardwick (1822–92) and by 1856 had an office at 8 Adam Street, Adelphi, Strand, London, and in his native Colchester.

<sup>7</sup> ‘John Howard & Sons, Cabinet Manufacturers and Upholsterers to the Honourable Board of Ordnance’, according to the firm’s letterhead, on an invoice from John Howard & Sons to Hayward, 27th June 1861; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F. The company was established by John Howard in 1820, moving to Berners Street by 1847. It exhibited at the Great Exhibition of 1851 and at the London International Exhibition, 1862.

<sup>8</sup> The bookcase is V. & A. 1079–1882; the Shakespeare Folios are London, National Art Library, Jones Collection, 1392, 1393 and 1394–1882.

<sup>9</sup> Jervis, *op. cit.* (note 3), p.206, suggests that Jones disposed of the bookcase when he moved from 6 Regent Street to 95 Piccadilly in 1865; it is repr. on p.207, fig.3.



35. Bookcase, by Charles Forster Hayward, panels painted by Edward John Poynter, executed by Howard & Sons, George E. Magnus and Peard & Jackson, London. 1860–61. Oak, carved, painted, gilded and stained, burl walnut inlay, electrogilded brass, copper alloy, enamelled slate, glass and silk, 93.7 by 115.6 by 45 cm. (Victoria and Albert Museum, London).



36. *Historia Antiqua*, by Edward John Poynter. 1861. Oil paint and gilding on panel, detail of Fig. 35. (Victoria and Albert Museum, London).



37. *Historia Nostra*, by Edward John Poynter. 1861. Oil paint and gilding on panel, detail of Fig. 35. (Victoria and Albert Museum, London).

discussed.<sup>10</sup> Hayward fell under the influence of the author of *The Stones of Venice* (1851–53), who called for architectural ornament to represent nature.<sup>11</sup> The formalised and densely arranged carving on the Poynter and Rossetti bookcases reflects Ruskin's influence as well as Jones's fondness for carving.<sup>12</sup> In January 1859 Hayward first met William Burges (1827–81), a medievalist and key figure in the revival of painted furniture in Britain,<sup>13</sup> and may have seen furniture – some decorated by Poynter who had returned from his studies in Paris in 1860 – at the architect's Buckingham Street office. He certainly saw examples at the Architectural Exhibition of 1859, where exhibits included Burges's 'Yatman' cabinet and 'Wine and Beers' sideboard, both

painted by Poynter in 1858 (Victoria and Albert Museum, London).<sup>14</sup> Most of Jones's collection of English paintings was of the modern British School, his general preference being for genre painters such as William Mulready and William Powell Frith rather than Classicists or Pre-Raphaelites.<sup>15</sup> Poynter's style, influenced by his training in Paris under Charles Gleyre (1806–74) and at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, introduced a contemporary continental note to Jones's collection. In July 1860, at Hayward's request, Burges wrote to Poynter offering him the commission.<sup>16</sup>

Perhaps the most surprising revelation in Hayward's papers is that the bookcase incorporating Poynter's two roundels was made to replace an earlier bookcase, which was almost completely

<sup>10</sup> Diary of Charles Forster Hayward, 15th February 1859, where Hayward records that Ruskin was chairing a meeting of the Architectural Photographic Society at which Street was 'speechifying [sic] on Venice'; HHC, HM/082/HAYWARD.

<sup>11</sup> In 1860 Hayward described the ornate metalwork decorating the roof of the University Museum, Oxford, a building with which Ruskin was closely involved, as 'a source of wonder'; *The Building News* 6 (6th April 1860), p.276. The carving on Jones's bookcases was first described as 'Ruskinian' in 1965; see Handley-Read, *op. cit.* (note 3), p.215; also Jervis, *op. cit.* (note 3), p.209, and *idem*: 'Ruskin and

Furniture', *Journal of the Furniture History Society* 9 (1973), p.105.

<sup>12</sup> Diary of Charles Forster Hayward, 29th August. Hayward recorded that the 1859 bookcase (private collection) had to be 'sent back for more carving yet' to the cabinet-maker; HHC, HM/082/HAYWARD.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, entry for 7th January 1859.

<sup>14</sup> Victoria and Albert Museum, Circ.217–1961 and 8042–1862.

<sup>15</sup> B.S. Long: *Catalogue of the Jones Collection*, London 1923, Part III, 'Paintings and Miniatures'.

<sup>16</sup> Letter from Burges to Hayward, 28th July 1860; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD.



38. Bookcase, by Charles Forster Hayward, with panels painted by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, executed by Howard & Sons, George E. Magnus and Peard & Jackson, London. 1862–63. Oak, carved, painted, gilded and stained, electrogilded brass, copper alloy, enamelled slate, glass and silk, 94.3 by 116 by 45.2 cm. (Victoria and Albert Museum, London).

destroyed by a fire around the time of its completion in January 1861. Moreover, the earlier bookcase incorporated six panels of painted oak by Poynter. In accepting the original commission, Poynter wrote to Hayward: 'I think £20 would be a fair price for the work on the cabinet; £4 for each figure & £2 for each of the heads'.<sup>17</sup> For each figure Hayward devised a framed upright panel, which was paired and surmounted by a roundel – an arrangement echoed in the second version. Poynter indicated that the work would take time: 'the figures are not large, but in severe work of the kind required good drawing is necessary; and for this end figures & draperies must be carefully studied from nature – I shall be able to begin them next week, but have not

C.F. Burges sent Hayward the address, 64 Torrington Square, where Poynter was then living with his older sister Clara and her husband Robert Courtenay Bell. For a published account of Poynter's career, see A. Staley: *The New Painting of the 1860s: Between the Pre-Raphaelites and the Aesthetic Movement*, New Haven and London 2011.

<sup>17</sup> Letter from Poynter to Hayward, undated ('Friday Aftn.'), but probably end of July or in August 1860; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* The panels on the side of the second version are approx 35 cm. high, suggesting that Poynter's figures were approx 30 cm. in height.

<sup>19</sup> Letter from Poynter to Hayward, 15th November 1860; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F.

yet had time to make out any sketches'.<sup>18</sup>

Poynter's six panels finally arrived at Howard & Sons by 15th November 1860.<sup>19</sup> Evidently the figures did not fit comfortably into their frames, for the artist asked Hayward: 'How have you arranged so that, in lowering the figures, the feet are not cut off?'<sup>20</sup> The need for this adjustment probably arose from Hayward's inexperience in designing such a complex piece of furniture: apart from the bookcases no other domestic furniture designed by him has been identified. The heads and figures also required their backgrounds to be gilded at Howard & Sons. Poynter cried off, explaining to Hayward:

I am sorry that I am not well enough to go out to-day to Berners St. as you proposed. If I can go to-morrow, I will. I should think, meanwhile, that a plain dead water-gilding will be the best thing for the background, (what they call mat gold) put on without filling up the grain of the oak with any preparation; I could, if you pleased, put the letters on afterwards myself; the gold, I should think, could be very well put on at Howard's; all they have to do is to be careful not to go over the black line round the figures.<sup>21</sup>

The heads on the replacement bookcase represent *Historia Antiqua* (Ancient History) and *Historia Nostra* (Our History), as identified by the Gothic lettering carved below them on the left and right sides respectively (Figs. 37 and 38). If, as seems likely, they were replicas of those on the earlier version, the two figures below presumably corresponded in theme and were identified by lettering on the gold backgrounds.

The top of the original bookcase was made of enamelled slate using a technique patented in 1840 by George Eugene Magnus (1801–73), proprietor of the Pimlico Slate Works (Jones, albeit with Hayward's encouragement, was receptive to modern manufacturing techniques).<sup>22</sup> The completion of the bookcase was further delayed by the decoration of the top, its overall design planned by Hayward and featuring cartouches destined to contain heads designed by Poynter (discussed below). The skill required to replicate Poynter's heads contributed to the delay in completing the decoration, for Magnus explained to Hayward: 'I have only one Artist Capable of doing such work as you require properly & he is Engaged ten deep giving Each Order its fair share'.<sup>23</sup>

These delays proved fatal: fire at Howard & Sons's premises, probably in January 1861, almost completely destroyed the bookcase. Hayward called at Howard's before writing to Jones to notify him that 'they will complete the cabinet in 3 months for the sum of £183 – & will pay out of this for the original paintings hinges &c the £41.16. – if you will provide the new ones again'; this sum was reimbursement for Poynter's painted decoration, as well as the hinges and top.<sup>24</sup> Jones was now cooling to the idea of reinstating the figures, for Hayward advised him that the replacements 'wd. not cost quite so much – especially if you do not desire the four figures to be inserted'.<sup>25</sup> The present version

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Hayward wrote to Magnus that he had been 'praising up your material' to Jones, in draft of letter from Hayward to Magnus, 9th May 1861; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F.

<sup>23</sup> Letter from Magnus to Hayward, 14th November 1860; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F.

<sup>24</sup> Draft of letter from Hayward to Jones, 6th February 1861; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

(Fig.35) shows the compromise that was reached: Hayward retained the arched upright panels, squeezing into them curiously carved linenfolds which recall, perhaps intentionally, cowed figures. Howard & Sons wasted no time in constructing the replacement bookcase to their new deadline. A few weeks later an employee of the cabinet-maker wrote to Hayward asking for the number of Poynter's studio in Grafton Street,<sup>26</sup> although by 13th May his colleague Matthew Ker (probably the foreman) was complaining that 'I have sent three times about the Paintings and have not recieved [*sic*] them yet'.<sup>27</sup>

*Historia Antiqua* (Fig.36) holds a stylus, her hair tied back with a ribbon to reveal an earring in the antique manner; *Historia Nostra* (Fig.37), brandishing a quill, wears her hair in a more up-to-date style, her collar or shawl made of fashionable black lace.<sup>28</sup> In stylistic and iconographic terms, they relate to heads that appear on other furniture painted by Poynter for Burges between 1858 and 1862, notably the personifications of *History* and *Poetry* (also on gilded backgrounds) on the gable ends of the 'Yatman' cabinet.<sup>29</sup> *Historia Antiqua* is strikingly similar to the raven-haired girl portrayed in Poynter's watercolour *Egyptian water carriers* (1862; private collection), and may be the same model.<sup>30</sup> Poynter applied little priming to the panels, on which the grain of the oak is now visible. The roundels, five inches in diameter, are fitted into carved frames flanked by sprays of fruiting bay, ancient symbol of victory.

Remarkably, the extant top was the third made by Magnus, for when the second top was delivered to Howard & Sons on 2nd May 1861 it was found to be a 'full four inches too wide'.<sup>31</sup> Magnus wrote to Hayward that 'such an Extraordinary article is utterly unsaleable & I shall have to destroy it. I regret to add that I cannot undertake to make another'.<sup>32</sup> Undeterred, Hayward replied, with some exaggeration, that 'my client [. . .] has a cabinet for which he has paid double & yet incomplete & useless without the top – For your own credit's sake therefore as well as for the artistic reputation of Enamelled slate I think you cannot object to do another top & that as soon as possible. How can we help the absurd error of your men – ?'<sup>33</sup> Magnus capitulated: 'I yield to your Powerful Arguments. The Slab is in hand & I hope

will neither be burnt nor wrong in size nor anything that is horrid & disagreeable?'<sup>34</sup> He also offered Hayward the misproportioned top at half price, raising the possibility that it survives unidentified.<sup>35</sup>

As mentioned above, Hayward's design for the top featured cartouches destined to contain heads designed by Poynter. Hayward apparently elaborated his designs as the project progressed, for neither the heads, nor the £3 fee for them, was mentioned in Poynter's letter accepting the commission.<sup>36</sup> The extant top (Fig.39) has in each corner a cartouche containing a male or female head representing a continent. Hayward's archive contains ten designs for them, two reproduced here (Figs.40 and 42).<sup>37</sup> Magnus's artist, to quote Hayward, 'faithfully copied' Poynter's designs.<sup>38</sup> Poynter slightly simplified the design for *Africa* (Fig.40), and radically altered his original design for *Europe* (Fig.42), as compared with those on the slate top (Figs.41 and 43). The fact that two previous tops were made may mean that those designs that were not used or appear in a modified version on the third top appeared on earlier versions.<sup>39</sup> It also accounts for the presence of designs for the central ornament (Fig.44) that do not appear on the third top.<sup>40</sup> This featured a portrait of Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800–59), based on a photograph taken in 1856 and contained within a quatrefoil.<sup>41</sup> Macaulay was flanked by female heads representing *Poetry* and *Eloquence* in petal-shaped frames, an arrangement echoed on the final top (Fig.39).

One might speculate as to whether Jones knew Lord Macaulay; a posthumous connection is that the author was buried in Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey, where Jones 'was a regular attendant on Sundays, and occasionally on weekdays'.<sup>42</sup> While the presence on his bookcase of a Whig politician may indicate Jones's political affiliations, the allusions to Macaulay's achievements as a poet and writer were thematically fitting for a bookcase, even if Jones does not appear to have owned an extensive library of his work.<sup>43</sup> Nevertheless, Macaulay provided a contemporary counterpoint to Shakespeare, a bust of whom adorned the cornice of Jones's first bookcase. It seems likely that Macaulay and his muses appeared on the

<sup>26</sup> Letter from J.(?) Nathan, John Howard & Sons, to Hayward, 22nd March 1861; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F.

<sup>27</sup> Letter from Matthew Ker, John Howard & Sons, to Hayward, 13th May 1861; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F.

<sup>28</sup> I am grateful to Jenny Lister for her comments on the dress. The lady depicted in Poynter's *The bunch of blue ribbons* (1862; private collection) wears a black lace collar; repr. Staley, *op. cit.* (note 16), p.199, pl.180.

<sup>29</sup> See also the heads painted on the 'Wines and Beers' sideboard and the cornice of the 'Great Bookcase' (1859–62; Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, WA1933.26).

<sup>30</sup> Staley, *op. cit.* (note 16), p.212, fig.196.

<sup>31</sup> Letter from Matthew Ker, John Howard & Sons, to Hayward, 3rd May 1861; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F.

<sup>32</sup> Letter from Magnus to Hayward, 7th May 1861; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F.

<sup>33</sup> Draft of letter from Hayward to Magnus, 9th May 1861; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F.

<sup>34</sup> Letter from Magnus to Hayward, 10th May 1861; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.* The previous day Hayward had written to Magnus: 'If however I can do any thing with it myself I will gladly do so', draft of letter from Hayward to Magnus, 9th May 1861; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD.

<sup>36</sup> Invoice from Poynter to Hayward, undated (probably December 1860), on which 'outline drawings for heads for top of Cabinet' are specified; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F.

<sup>37</sup> The other eight designs are *Europe*: one identical to the final version (Fig.43), without a border and one study for the earlier design reproduced (Fig.42) with a border and verso on a sheet with a pencil study for *Macaulay* recto (see note 40 below); *Asia*:

one identical to the final version (Fig.39), without a border; *America*: one identical to the final version (Fig.39), reversed and without a border, and two slightly more elaborate versions, one with a border and the other reversed and without a border; *Africa*: one identical to the final version (Fig.41), reversed and without a border and the other almost identical to the design reproduced (Fig.40) without a border; all HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F. For a comparison with the designs for *America*, see *Janus* (1860), one of Poynter's pen-and-ink designs for the ceiling decoration of Waltham Abbey, Essex; Victoria and Albert Museum, E.5260–1919. I am grateful to Alison Inglis for this observation.

<sup>38</sup> Draft of letter from Hayward to the editor of *Cassell's Magazine of Art*, 1st December 1893; HHC, HM/056/HAYWARD, C.F.

<sup>39</sup> The edges of some designs are trimmed and bear damage from pin-holes, suggesting their use during the decorating process; see *Macaulay* (Fig.44).

<sup>40</sup> The other designs are *Macaulay*: one closely related to that here reproduced (Fig.44), unlettered, and one roughly sketched in pencil wearing a crown of bay leaves, in a pen-and-ink framework, recto on a sheet with a preparatory study for *Europe* verso (see note 37 above); and *Poetry* and *Eloquence*, on one sheet inscribed with titles, related to those reproduced (Fig.44); all HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F.

<sup>41</sup> Poynter's portrait appears to be based on one of the photographs taken by the fashionable London studio of Maull & Polyblank in April 1856; see, for example, National Portrait Gallery, London, Photographs Collection, NPG Ax7515.

<sup>42</sup> Maskell, *op. cit.* (note 3), p.7.

<sup>43</sup> By 1860 Jones may have possessed only the three-volume *Critical and Historical Essays, Contributed to The Edinburgh Review*, London 1844; he later acquired the 1865 edition. Jones's copies of these two editions are National Art Library, Jones Collection, 1334 and 1335–1882.



39. Top of the bookcase in Fig. 35. Enamelled slate. (Victoria and Albert Museum, London).



40. *Africa*, by Edward John Poynter. 1860-61. Pen and ink on tracing paper, 63.5 by 68 cm. (Hayward History Centre, Lingfield).



41. *Africa*, by Edward John Poynter, detail of Fig. 39.



42. *Europe*, by Edward John Poynter. 1860-61. Pen and ink on tracing paper, 63.5 by 68 cm. (Hayward History Centre, Lingfield).



43. *Europe*, by Edward John Poynter, detail of Fig. 39.



44. *Poetry, Macaulay and Eloquence*, by Edward John Poynter. 1860–61. Pen and ink on tracing paper, 4.7 by 4.9, 12.2 by 11.6, and 4.6 by 4.8 cm. (Hayward History Centre, Lingfield).

first, destroyed top of the Poynter bookcase, and possibly also on the second.<sup>44</sup> Their omission from the third may merely indicate that Jones had changed his mind, or that he was growing impatient with the top's completion (the bookcase was finished in mid-May 1861, but the top not until late July).<sup>45</sup> The central ornament of the final top consists of a bird in an ivy wreath flanked by butterflies, to Magnus's designs, rendered in simulated *pietra dura* (Fig.39).<sup>46</sup>

It was not until August 1862 that Hayward wrote to Jones estimating the costs of another bookcase (Fig.38). In September 1861, shortly after the completion of the Poynter bookcase, Hayward was bound for New York aboard Isambard Kingdom Brunel's *Great Eastern* when a gale damaged the vessel, and his journey was aborted at Queenstown, County Cork.<sup>47</sup> If Hayward continued to the USA, this would explain the timing of the commission for the next bookcase. The estimate Hayward sent to Jones came to £180, of which £5 was allocated for painted decoration: 'In this there is a sum of £10 included for contingencies or a little extra work – which can be cut off if necessary & if you would like a painting in the side instead of the carving (as originally done to the one that was burnt –) the charge for carving would be less but of course the painting more – so that it would come to much the same'.<sup>48</sup> Hayward's explanation suggests that Jones needed to be persuaded that painted decoration would not increase the cost of the bookcase and that, financially, Jones kept Hayward on a tight reign. Painted decoration was

clearly Hayward's preference, for he asked Howard to 'send me the panels. It is possible we may wish to omit the carving in the side panels & substitute paintings as in the first Cabinet that was burnt but of this I will inform you'.<sup>49</sup>

Hayward may initially have become aware of Rossetti's work in January 1859, when he visited the first major exhibition held by the Hogarth Club, a short-lived Pre-Raphaelite venture.<sup>50</sup> In 1862 numerous examples of painted furniture were displayed in the Medieval Court of the London International Exhibition, including the 'King René's Honeymoon' cabinet (1861; Victoria and Albert Museum, London) designed by John Pollard Seddon (1827–1906).<sup>51</sup> It incorporated ten panels painted by members of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co., including two by Seddon's friend Rossetti. Hayward had probably known Seddon since the late 1850s, and it was through Seddon that he approached Rossetti in relation to Jones's final bookcase, asking the artist to paint two roundels to match those on the one by Poynter.

Rossetti was undoubtedly grateful for additional income during a time of emotional upheaval. His letters to Hayward bear black borders, reflecting the fact that his wife and unborn child had died earlier that year.<sup>52</sup> Seddon wrote to Hayward on 22nd October 1862, informing him that 'Rossetti will do your 2 panels for £5'.<sup>53</sup> As relayed by Seddon, Rossetti offered alternative treatments: 'Either on a gold Ground in shades of brown, in which case there will be no color [*sic*]. Or in colors as you please. If you prefer the former have the panels gilt & sent to him. In the

<sup>44</sup> While the second slab was being prepared Magnus wrote to Hayward requesting 'the drawing of the Head for the Slab', letter from Magnus to Hayward, 22nd March 1861; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F. and subsequently: 'The slab is now quite ready for the centre ornament [ . . . ] No more can be done to it until you see it'; *ibid.*, 8th April 1861.

<sup>45</sup> Invoice from John Howard & Sons to Hayward (c.27th June 1861), in which the bookcase is dated 18th May; and invoice from George E. Magnus to Hayward, 23rd July 1861; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F.

<sup>46</sup> See S.S. Jervis and D. Dodd: *Roman Splendour, English Arcadia: The English Taste for Pietre Dure and the Sixtus Cabinet at Stourhead*, London 2015, p.39.

<sup>47</sup> I am grateful to Janet H. Bateson for this information. Hayward's dramatic drawing of the ship's grand saloon during the gale was engraved and published in *The Illustrated London News* 39 (28th September 1861), p.311.

<sup>48</sup> Draft of letter from Hayward to Jones, 28th August 1862; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F.

<sup>49</sup> Draft of letter from Hayward to John Howard & Sons, 18th September 1862; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F.

<sup>50</sup> Diary of Charles Forster Hayward, 11th January 1859; HHC, HM/082/HAYWARD.

<sup>51</sup> Victoria and Albert Museum, W.10–1927.

<sup>52</sup> Letter from Rossetti to Hayward, undated ('Monday'), probably 17th November 1862; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F., and sale Christie's, South Kensington, London, *Manuscript Letters and Ephemera*, 15th November 1991, note to lot 27.

<sup>53</sup> Letter from Seddon to Hayward, 22nd October 1862; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.* Seddon gave Rossetti's address at 59 Lincoln's Inn Fields, 'but he moves on



45. *Flos*, by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, detail of Fig.38.

latter case send the panels as they are'.<sup>54</sup> Hayward's later claim that he himself 'took him [Rossetti] the panels' is not substantiated by the correspondence, although his assertion that he showed his bookcase designs to Rossetti is more likely.<sup>55</sup> If such a meeting took place, it may have been then that Rossetti suggested the subjects of *Flos* (flower or blossom) and *Fructus* (fruit), 'Without more than a chat over it with me', as Hayward recalled,<sup>56</sup> and Hayward chose the second, coloured, option offered by Rossetti.

*Flos* and *Fructus* (Figs.45 and 46) were conceived in the tradition that Rossetti initiated with *Bocca Baciata* (1859; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston), a small panel painting of Fanny Cornforth (1835–c.1906) that Hayward may have seen at the Hogarth Club's 1860 exhibition.<sup>57</sup> *Bocca Baciata* heralded a series of intimate paintings of women holding flowers with a strong emphasis on colouring influenced by Venetian cinquecento painting – what Rossetti's brother William later characterised as 'beautiful women with floral adjuncts'.<sup>58</sup> The titles of *Flos* and *Fructus* are inscribed towards the upper-left edges of the roundels in medieval-style lettering comparable to that on Rossetti's painting *Love's greeting* (c.1861; Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston).<sup>59</sup> *Flos* clutches a red rose, symbolic of love, and appears to be modelled on Fanny Cornforth, the artists' model and Rossetti's intimate companion. Her upturned head accentuates her long neck, which is framed 'with a mass of the most lovely blonde hair – light-golden or "harvest yellow"', in strong con-



46. Fig.38 seen from the side, showing *Fructus* and two further panels by Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

trast to the peacock-blue background.<sup>60</sup> Cornforth's pose is similar to that of one of the small heads Rossetti designed about 1861–62 to decorate the front seat rail of a sofa (c.1863; Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge).<sup>61</sup>

*Fructus* is a portrait of Agnes ('Aggie') Manetti, another of Rossetti's models (Fig.46). The head and hand of *Fructus* are so closely related to a watercolour of Manetti entitled *Sweet tooth* (1862–64; private collection) that both works appear to have been based on similar if not the same studies.<sup>62</sup> These studies may have been among the 'divers drawings of "Fatty" Aggie M.' that

Monday [29th October] to Chelsea'.

<sup>55</sup> Draft of letter from Hayward to the editor of *Cassell's Magazine of Art*, 1st December 1893; HHC, HM/056/HAYWARD, C.F.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1980.261.

<sup>58</sup> W.M. Rossetti: *Dante Gabriel Rossetti: His Family-Letters*, London 1895, I, p.203.

<sup>59</sup> Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, P1w8; repr. V. Surtees: *The Paintings and Drawings of Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828–1882): A Catalogue Raisonné*, Oxford 1971, 2, pl.195, no.126.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, M/F.1 & A-1918. The design for the roundel, reversed to that on the sofa, is on the top left of a sheet of designs in Birmingham

Museums and Art Gallery, 1904P321 (Surtees, *op. cit.*, note 59, 746), repr. A. Grieve; *The Art of Dante Gabriel Rossetti: The Years 1846–1848 and 1858–1862*, Norwich 2012, p.120, fig.6/4. Grieve, pp.108–09 and 116, dates the designs to c.1861–62, suggesting that Cornforth was the model and that the sofa may have been decorated after Rossetti moved to Cheyne Walk.

<sup>62</sup> See Surtees, *op. cit.* (note 59) 1, addenda no.123; sale Christie's, London, *Fine English Drawings and Watercolours*, 3rd March 1970, lot 151, repr. A closely related pencil drawing (1863; private collection) is reproduced in sale Sotheby's, London, *Nineteenth Century European Paintings, Drawings and Watercolours*, 19th June 1991, lot 232. For another study showing the head of the sitter with a grape stalk between her teeth, see Surtees, *op. cit.* (note 59), p.157, cat.263, *Aggie* (1862), in the collection of the National Gallery of Wales, Cardiff, 3184.



the artist George Price Boyce saw when he visited Rossetti's studio on 22nd October 1862.<sup>63</sup> On the bookcase Manetti is portrayed eating grapes; in Latin *fructus* also denotes pleasure and enjoyment, and in addition to bacchic undertones there are echoes of the verse fairy tale *Goblin Market*, written by Rossetti's sister Christina and published (with illustrations by him) in 1862; one of the girls is referred to as 'sweet-tooth Laura', while the tempting fruits include 'Pelucid grapes without one seed'.<sup>64</sup>

The jewel-like, early sixteenth-century Venetian palette favoured by Rossetti at that date was perfectly attuned to the Ruskinian carving of the bookcase. The Rossetti bookcase is the most richly decorated of the set, and its details recall one of Ruskin's descriptions of Venetian carving: 'palm leaves and lilies, and grapes and pomegranates, and birds clinging and fluttering among the branches, all twined together into an endless network of buds and plumes' (Figs. 45 and 46).<sup>65</sup> The finest parts of the carving were executed by William Henry Baylis (1836–1909) – son of a gardener – who may well have carved the Poynter bookcase; he supplied work to various firms, and his exhibits had recently been praised at the London International Exhibition of 1862 for 'a repose and vigorous touch which are not often united in so young an artist'.<sup>66</sup> The bookcase carving reflected the subjects of Rossetti's roundels, suggesting that Hayward responded to their iconography; two bosses below *Flos* contain flowers including roses, while those below *Fructus* are filled with cherries and strawberries. Hayward probably planned the overall design of the enamelled slate top, which incorporates roses, cherries and a central medallion in which two putti in a winter landscape warm themselves by a fire, symbolic of love.

*Flos* and *Fructus* were among the first paintings executed by Rossetti at Tudor House, Cheyne Walk, in Chelsea. On 29th October, a week after Seddon had written to Hayward confirming the commission, Rossetti was preparing to move into the house.<sup>67</sup> On 2nd November he informed Ford Madox Brown: 'I have reclaimed my studio from the general wilderness & got to work',<sup>68</sup> and the following day reported to Hayward: 'I have done the little circular panels for your cabinet'.<sup>69</sup> That they were executed rapidly is supported by the fact that little if any priming appears to have been applied to the panels before they were painted. A few days later, on 7th November, Rossetti received a £5 note from Hayward.<sup>70</sup> However, Rossetti wrote to him: 'I

have reason to think – indeed to feel sure – that the bank-note I had of you yesterday has been stolen out of my pocket. Do you know the number of it, & if so, would you kindly write me word at once'.<sup>71</sup>

Jones must have approved of the roundels, and Hayward probably persuaded him that Rossetti should provide painted decorations for the four panels below them. Hayward wanted Rossetti to see the panels, but on 17th November Ker of Howard & Sons explained that the ornamental frames, which had been glued onto them for a carver to work, needed to be removed and their outline traced onto the panels; they would not be ready until the next morning.<sup>72</sup> On 18th November Hayward had a messenger take the panels to Rossetti, and met Jones to discuss the commission.<sup>73</sup> Hayward wrote to Rossetti:

my friend [. . .] says the price he can afford is what was paid for the panels in an other Cabinet painted for us by some other gentleman a year or two ago – viz 3£ each pair of panels – This does not seem much but we do not want so much work as in the heads – & perhaps you will therefore be kind enough to apportion your work according to this figure – I am restricted to this & therefore if you do not like to spend your time upon them please let me know.<sup>74</sup>

In an attempt to negotiate for Jones, Hayward was not being honest with Rossetti: Poynter had been paid the equivalent of £8 for each pair of painted panels. It is therefore hardly surprising that Hayward avoided naming Poynter, lest Rossetti discover the truth. Rossetti responded: 'I would be willing to do the 4 for £10 but could not for less. Then it would be simple work in brown on the gilding, but would include head or half figure in each [. . .] Please let me have a word by return. Your messenger took the panels back to gild them so they are with him as yet'.<sup>75</sup> Hayward reluctantly had to offer Rossetti a rather low fee with correspondingly reduced expectations:

I am sorry I am not able to go beyond the sum previously stated. Perhaps you can give us a group of flowers or fruit running up the centre of the panels in some conventional way & so reduce the trouble to yourself – & we will dispense with figures – I fancy only full length figures would do – a head or half figure would be on a scale too large for the rest of the details

<sup>63</sup> V. Surtees, ed.: *The Diaries of George Price Boyce*, Norwich 1980, p. 36.

<sup>64</sup> C. Rossetti: *Goblin Market and other Poems*, London and Cambridge 1862, pp. 7 and 10.

<sup>65</sup> J. Ruskin: *The Stones of Venice*, London 1853, II, p. 66.

<sup>66</sup> *Cassell's Illustrated Family Paper Exhibitor* (9th August 1862), p. 90.

<sup>67</sup> Surtees, *op. cit.* (note 63), p. 36.

<sup>68</sup> Letter from Rossetti to Ford Madox Brown, 2nd November 1862; W.E. Fredeman, ed.: *The Correspondence of Dante Gabriel Rossetti: The Formative Years, 1835–1862*, Cambridge 2002, II (1855–1862), p. 501 (F.62.74).

<sup>69</sup> Letter from Rossetti to Hayward, 3rd November 1862; *ibid.*, p. 502 (F.62.75).

<sup>70</sup> Letter from Rossetti to Hayward, undated ('Monday'), probably 10th November 1862; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F.

<sup>71</sup> Letter from Rossetti to Hayward, undated ('Saturday'), 8th November 1862; Fredeman, *op. cit.* (note 68), p. 503 (F.62.75.2). Fredeman dated the letter to 15th November but it was written on the previous Saturday. Hayward sent Rossetti the wrong number, for when Rossetti tried to have the note stopped the Bank of England informed him that the number belonged to another one that had been cashed on the 6th; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F., letter from Rossetti to Hayward, undated ('Monday'), probably 10th November 1862.

<sup>72</sup> Letter from Matthew Ker, John Howard & Sons, to Hayward, 17th November 1862; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F.

<sup>73</sup> Draft of letter from Hayward to Rossetti, 18th November 1862; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> Letter from Rossetti to Hayward, undated ('Tuesday Night'). Fredeman dated the letter to 11th November, however I suggest it was written a week later, as it appears to be in reply to Hayward's letter of the 18th; Fredeman, *op. cit.* (note 68), p. 502 (F.62.75.1).

<sup>76</sup> Letter from Hayward to Rossetti, 19th November 1862; *ibid.*, p. 503 (F.62.75.2A).

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> The fencing was ordered by Philip Webb in November 1859; J. Marsh: *William Morris & Red House: A Collaboration*, London 2005, p. 56.

<sup>79</sup> See, for example, that in the background of a panel designed by Burne-Jones depicting Adam and Eve for the dining room of Bradfield College, Berkshire, in 1857, repr. in A.C. Sewter: *The Stained Glass of William Morris and his Circle*, New Haven and London 1974, pl. 16. Morris depicted a less densely built fence behind the figures of King Arthur and Sir Lancelot in a window in the entrance hall for Harden Grange, near Bingley, Yorkshire, in 1862; the cartoon for this, in the collection of the William Morris Gallery, London, is reproduced in Sewter, pl. 82.

<sup>80</sup> Letter from Rossetti to William Allingham (c.20th January 1861), image repr. p. 342; Fredeman, *op. cit.* (note 68), pp. 342–3 (F.61.5).

– & as we have tried them in a previous Cabinet to which this is to correspond it would not do to adopt another scale of figure now.<sup>76</sup>

Nevertheless, Hayward tried to encourage Rossetti to paint figures on the panels, explaining that ‘the curve of the upper part of outline was arranged to take the upper part of the figure better – if we could afford it we should have liked on the fruit side – the head of a tree filling the head of the outline & a couple of figures plucking fruit & something to correspond on the other side but it is useless to think of this now – we would be content with something much more simple and less costly’.<sup>77</sup> In describing figures ‘plucking fruit’ Hayward may have been thinking of the small panel representing *Gardening* that Rossetti had contributed to Seddon’s ‘King René’s Honeymoon’ cabinet.

Rossetti’s ingeniously economical ‘simple work’ consisted of wattle fences (Fig.46), recalling those made of hazel that he would have seen at Morris’s home, Red House, at Bexleyheath, Kent.<sup>78</sup> Morris and Edward Burne-Jones had incorporated wattle fences in their stained-glass designs, and in the background of Rossetti’s painting *Love’s greeting* one stands before a flowering rose.<sup>79</sup> Rossetti followed Hayward’s suggestion of filling the upper parts of the panels with treetops that echo those in a sketch made by Rossetti for wallpaper in 1861,<sup>80</sup> while their deployment on the sides of furniture recalls the fruiting tree that Burne-Jones had painted on each side of the ‘Prioress’s Tale’ cabinet (1857–59; Ashmolean Museum, Oxford).<sup>81</sup> On the bookcase panels the trees are populated with birds, the inclusion of which complements the romantic theme of the roundels, as emphasised by Rossetti’s choice of a bird that same year to symbolise love and loss on a watch-case (untraced) for which designs survive.<sup>82</sup> He completed the four bookcase panels by 24th November 1862, when Hayward wrote to Howard & Sons asking for them ‘to be brought away at once as Mr. R– is going out of town’.<sup>83</sup> Rossetti informed Hayward on 26th November: ‘Messrs. H[oward] sent for the panels yesterday but they were not quite dry so I told them to bring me the £6 due since I am going into the country immediately & do not know exactly how long I may remain there’.<sup>84</sup> The Rossetti bookcase was completed by the end of February 1863, Hayward finally invoicing Jones for £181 5s., only fractionally exceeding the original estimate of £180.<sup>85</sup>

In 1865 the Poynter and Rossetti bookcases were among the objects that Jones moved to his new home, a town house at 95 Piccadilly, and the following year he agreed to lend the one painted by Rossetti to the 1867 Paris Exposition Universelle. It was there awarded an honourable mention, and Hayward, encouraged by this, submitted a photograph of it to the Architectural Exhibition Society in 1868.<sup>86</sup> A photograph taken c.1863 reveals that, when new, the mask of a ‘Green man’ filled the boss above each door; these carvings were subsequently chiselled off and replaced by gilt-brass masks of Hercules, illustrating Jones’s desire to integrate his bookcases with his growing collection of French decorative arts.<sup>87</sup> That Hayward and Jones had become friends as a result of the project is expressed in the (rather unusual) incorporation of Hayward’s monograms on the decorative hinge-plates of both bookcases. In 1868 Hayward’s naming of his eldest son Charles John is also perhaps significant because Jones, godfather to the boy, later bequeathed him £1,000.<sup>88</sup>

Hayward remained conscious not only of his own achievement in designing the bookcases, but also their significance to Jones. It is entirely possible Hayward encouraged the Museum to accept the bookcases in 1882, as they are the only examples of ‘modern’ furniture in the bequest. Although Hayward had been named (again, one suspects at his own instigation) as the designer of the bookcases in the Museum’s *Handbook of the Jones Collection* (1883),<sup>89</sup> Poynter and Rossetti’s contributions were not acknowledged, and Hayward’s letter to the editor of the *Magazine of Art* a decade later revealed that the bookcases were not regarded as integral to the Jones Bequest. This was despite the fact, as Hayward pointed out, that Poynter was ‘now Connected with this Museum intimately’ and that ‘I therefore venture to consider these as Works of Art’.<sup>90</sup> Hayward’s frustration must have been heightened when Seddon’s ‘King René’s Honeymoon’ cabinet was displayed in two London exhibitions in 1897 and 1898, and Seddon published a book commemorating them for posterity as well as an illustrated article on the cabinet in the *Magazine of Art*.<sup>91</sup> The Poynter and Rossetti bookcases may now be recognised not only as testaments to Hayward’s skill as a designer and his enduring friendship with Jones, but also as two of the Victoria and Albert Museum’s most important and thoroughly documented examples of nineteenth-century furniture.

<sup>81</sup> Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, WA 1939.2.

<sup>82</sup> I am grateful to Geoffrey Munn for this reference; see G. Munn, ‘Not Lost but Gone Before: The Story of the Rossetti Watch’, *Journal of the Decorative Arts Society* 35 (2011) p.38, fig.4a.

<sup>83</sup> Draft of letter from Hayward to John Howard & Sons, 24th November 1862; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F.

<sup>84</sup> Letter from Rossetti to Hayward, 26th November 1862; Fredeman, *op. cit.* (note 68), p.506 (F.62.75.3). Fredeman notes that Rossetti originally intended to leave for Newcastle to visit William and Letitia Bell Scott on 30th November, but that he was forced to postpone his departure to 8th December owing to accumulated work. Hayward asked Howard & Sons for a cheque for £11 5s. ‘to pay for the painted panels for Mr. Jones’ Cabinet. Part of this sum Mr. H. has paid himself some time ago’; draft letter from Hayward to John Howard & Sons, 24th November 1862; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F. The amount ‘paid [. . .] some time ago’ presumably referred to the £5 that Rossetti had lost, while the balance, £6 5s., is higher than the £6 agreed for the four side panels, indicating that Hayward paid Rossetti five shillings extra.

<sup>85</sup> Invoice from John Howard & Sons to Hayward, 28th February 1863; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F. and draft of statement from Hayward to Jones (c.5th May 1863).

<sup>86</sup> Architectural Exhibition Society, exh. cat. *Architectural Exhibition*, London (9 Conduit Street) 1868, p.35, no.340.

<sup>87</sup> The masks follow a model used on furniture from the Paris workshop of André-Charles Boulle, c.1700; HHC, HM/054/HAYWARD, C.F.

<sup>88</sup> Last Will and Testament of John Jones, 4th December 1879, p.5; V. & A., MA/1/J721/1.

<sup>89</sup> Maskell, *op. cit.* (note 3), p.34.

<sup>90</sup> Draft of letter from Hayward to the editor of Cassell’s *Magazine of Art*, 1st December 1893; HHC, HM/056/HAYWARD, C.F. Among other projects, in 1864 Poynter designed for the South Court of the Museum two mosaics depicting *Phidias* and *Apelles* for what came to be known as the ‘Kensington Valhalla’, and in 1866 began designing tiles for the V. & A.’s Grill Room; he also served as director and principal of the National Art Training Schools at South Kensington between 1875 and 1881.

<sup>91</sup> J.P. Seddon: *King René’s Honeymoon Cabinet*, London 1898, and ‘The “King René’s Honeymoon” Cabinet’, *Magazine of Art* 20 (April 1897), pp.323–24. The exhibitions were the *Exhibition of the Works of Ford Madox Brown*, London (Grafton Galleries), 1897; and *Exhibition of Pictures Ancient and Modern by Artists of the British and Continental Schools including a special selection from the works of Dante Gabriel Rossetti*, London (New Gallery), 1898, cat. no.74.