

APPENDIX TWO

A Royal 'Haagse klok' "Severyn Oosterwijck Haghe met privilege"

Reviewed by Keith Piggott

Recommendation for Conservation

Conservation is always a matter for the owner, or curator. Conservators are always bound by their client's brief. Policies differ widely. Some will remove anachronistic additions, or replace lost fittings shown by witness marks. Others will simply stabilise the extant – whatever the final visual result. I recommend the excellent work by Mathew King and Matthew Read, on Fromanteel's longcase, at The Museum of the History of Science at Oxford; also Matthew Read's outstanding work, albeit to a more proactive brief, on the Bowes Museum's Silver Swan (that I knew as a boy) recognised as one of England's spectacular Cultural Properties. His methods and photo-inventories are a model. Their joint lecture to the Antiquarian Horological Society proved a fascinating insight into Oxford's exciting Fromanteel clock, and the constraints of their briefs. I had earlier also reviewed that clock at first hand.

Paul Shrouder has ably conserved Oosterwijck's exceptional movement, returning it to running order while retaining the abused contrate and evidence of surface detail finishes so important to antiquarians as craft-signatures; we value these. In the past many horologists have arbitrarily rebuilt or over-cleaned some of our finest masterpieces, however the mood is changing. However, in Oosterwijck's Royal Haagseklok movement one 'restorer' has left damning evidence of his own cultural vandalism.

Restorer's inscriptions are cultural vandalism. Why would he inscribe, "*I did not bump the bearings I did not touch them July 7, 1970 (X)*"? The 'bearings' (pivot holes to barrel and pin-wheel) probably were 'bumped' after the earlier accident. He also scribed the hour-wheel, "*Lever added adjusted and repaired July 1970 (X)*". Paul Shrouder has seen his cryptic invoices; we believe the strike 'lever' is actually untouched, whereas the hammer 'lever' has evidence of alterations and is also wrongly located; probably reworked and moved in 1970. The hammer should be returned to its original pivots and its spring re-profiled to act under the hammer. I should have those defacing inscriptions planished out. Restorer's notes of 'repairs' are for detailed invoices or formal reports, certainly not on cultural object itself.

Oosterwijck's unique clock has suffered accident and too long been overlooked. Its Ebony on Kingwood case is very important. Fortunately, box and frame are stable; there is no need for invasive dismantling of either. I would limit conservation to;

THE BOX: X-ray the hanging points for broken screws; replace iron* suspension rings. *Rust was found in the screw sockets. Brass eyelets are the other alternative.

Even in Coster's oeuvre (1657-1659) there is no standard form, (compare **D1, D2, D3, D4 D5, D8, and D10**). Coster **D1** has elongated steel eyelets, also seen on his timepiece-

alarm **D5**, [See contemporary [box-cases](#), comparable to Oosterwijck's Royal Hague-clock - **RH**].

Leave the upper peg holes, as probable evidence for a crest or pediment being added then removed. Make good solid show-wood (Kingwood) backboard; close the two drilled holes; re-glue the split. Enclose the two inner chopped-out sides of the box with matching Kingwood veneers. Replace the damaged veneers fronting the dial-pins; repair the cracked and lifting ebony veneer around the lock mortice. Remove the later steady strips, nailed beneath the box, to end its "**Mantle Clock**" status for good.

THE DOOR: Tidy up and square off disturbed outer veneers at the lower right corner.

I am pleased to be able to report that Mr Mathew King agreed to carry out the sensitive conservation. These images convey his progress.



Kingwood slips now cover the chopped-out sides

Kingwood backboard holes filled, ebony veneers repaired



~~~~~**RKP**~~~~~