The Care of Antiques & Works of Art
Antiques have been passed down by our ancestors over the centuries to our present generation, so by their very nature have stood the test of time. They may have taken a few knocks in those earlier ages, but surprisingly, despite all our 21st-century creature comforts, it is the modern world, with its central heating and chemical cleaning products, which poses particular challenges for such objects.

You may have spent a considerable sum acquiring a beautiful and valuable antique, so you do not want to throw away that investment by failing to look after it. Half the battle is knowing just when to try and remedy a defect yourself and when to leave it to the experts. Here are some basic recommendations, compiled through extensive consultation with specialists who have the greatest experience of handling antiques on a daily basis – members of The British Antique Dealers’ Association. We hope this guide helps you to decide what to do, and when.
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What is the BADA?

The British Antique Dealers’ Association (BADA) is the trade association for the leading antique dealers in Britain. Since its foundation in 1918 BADA has set the standard for trading in the antiques business. Its main aim is to establish and maintain confidence between its members and the public, both in buying and selling.

A professional association

Members are elected to the association for their high business standards and expertise. They adhere to a vigorously enforced code as laid down in the association’s Bye-laws. After a thorough election procedure dealers continue to have their membership renewed and confirmed annually.

BADA members pride themselves on their reputation for integrity, wide knowledge of their chosen field of specialisation and the high quality of their stock. It is for this reason that a member of the public can have confidence when buying from, or selling to, a member of the BADA. The Association provides safeguards for those who deal with its members, including independent arbitration if disputes arise.
There are approximately 350 dealers throughout Britain who have met the very high standards that BADA demands. Details about the dealers can either be found using the Dealer Search facilities of our web site, www.bada.org, in our List of Members or by contacting BADA’s national headquarters.

_BADA dealers know only too well just how important it is to care for antiques and works of art properly, which is why they have contributed to this publication. Keep it in a safe place – you never know when you might need it!_
Securing your antiques and works of art

Looking after antiques and works of art is not simply a question of maintaining and housing them, but also of protecting them from theft or other perils.

The BADA and its members are often asked how one should value, secure and insure antiques and works of art, so here we offer some general guidance to help owners and collectors understand the issues involved.

VALUATIONS

Valuations, with good descriptions and photographs, can assist with identification after a burglary or repair after damage, and with any subsequent insurance claim. Details of stolen items can be lodged with international databases, such as the Art Loss Register.

The basis of valuation will depend upon its intended purpose, which is usually either for probate, Inheritance Tax planning, family division, sale, or replacement. For the purpose of insurance the replacement value is usually used, but for larger collections this can vary according to the wishes of the owner, provided this is agreed with the insurer.

Some members of The British Antique Dealers’ Association (BADA) will be able to help with valuations as well as provide photographs of your antiques and works of art. To find a BADA member who carries out valuations use our Dealer Search facility on our web site www.bada.org.

It is advisable to keep earlier valuations and receipts, so that you can maintain a complete history of your collection which will assist in confirming provenance for future generations.
SECURITY

Security companies such as Banham or Chubb produce useful literature that give recommendations about locks and alarms, and your local police Crime Prevention Officer and specialist art insurance brokers will also be happy to give you advice.

Outside garden furniture and statuary should be secured by being cemented or chained, and gardens can have alarm sensors fitted to detect intruders.

LISTING AND PHOTOGRAPHING ANTIQUES

The police are often hampered in their efforts to recover stolen property because owners are unable to supply accurate descriptions or photographs. Photographs help the police and the recovery agencies (such as the Art Loss Register) to return stolen antiques and works of art to their rightful owners.

When photographing your valuables it is best to use a digital camera. Give some indication of size by including a ruler or a coin in the photograph and ensure the article being photographed is as large as possible in the viewfinder, but do not let the image go out of focus. Where possible take photographs using good natural daylight which can reduce reflections on polished metal or glass.

Where the objects form part of a set, take individual photographs to show fine details, as opposed to an overall view. Photograph glassware and silverware against a dark background. For other items use a light or neutral background — plain brown paper is ideal. Avoid any pattern in the background.

Keep the images in a secure place, preferably on a memory stick separate from your computer, together with an inventory of the items. Do not keep them in your antique bureau — it could be one of the items stolen in the burglary!

Best practice is to keep values apart from the descriptions, referencing
the one to the other by employing a reference numbering system. Do not feel you have to submit the full descriptive version of the valuation to your insurers, as many of the specialist art insurers agree this is not necessary.

It can be helpful to record DVD footage of every room of your home, thereby providing evidence of the condition of your property. An added bonus is that you can talk over the recording.

MARKING

There are a number of ways of marking your antiques and works of art to help make it more likely that your possessions are recovered.
The mark you make must be unique and should enable the police to recognise it. Our advice is to check that the police support the type of technology being used, and regularly look for such marks, otherwise they may not be spotted. Examples of marking methods include those that rely on ultra violet detection. One method called ‘Smartwater’, a harmless liquid with a unique DNA code, enables very small quantities to be painted on property and can be spotted by the police with the use of an ultra violet lamp. There are also Microdots, scattered liberally so that the offender would neither wish nor be able to clean and remove all of them. Microchips can be embedded into the antique or work of art. Ask your antique dealer for advice to ensure that no damage is caused otherwise this will result in loss in value of the object.

INSURANCE

Insurance should not be regarded as a substitute for security, but rather a back-up, so that, if all reasonable security precautions fail, then you have peace of mind that you will be compensated.

Standard house & contents insurance will typically only provide somewhat limited cover for antiques and works of art. For those owning contents with an overall value of £100,000 and upwards, it is possible to be insured on a policy that caters for higher values, and provides wider cover. At this level insurers also try better to understand clients’ situations and will agree to tailor the cover to suit individual needs. Such insurers may usually only be accessed via an insurance broker who acts on behalf of the client to obtain the most appropriate insurance terms and best claims settlement.

A number of specialist antiques and art insurance brokers are Recommended Service Providers of the BADA. This means that they are used by members of the Association and have a good track record. All BADA Recommended Service Providers are listed on www.bada.org or in our annually published List of Members. They can be identified from a specially designed logo.
Furniture

ENVIRONMENT MATTERS

Antique furniture needs to be protected from fluctuations in temperature and relative humidity. These can cause a great deal of damage that is costly to repair. Fine furniture that may have survived for centuries in unheated conditions can suffer major harm in just one or two winters of central heating. The reason for this is that antique furniture is constructed from air-dried timber and has a higher water content than most modern furniture, which is usually made of kiln-dried wood containing less moisture. When subjected to low levels of relative humidity, it gradually gives up moisture to the dry surrounding atmosphere and starts to shrink and split along the grain. This is aggravated when underlying pieces of wood used in the construction are laid at right angles to each other and then veneered over. Movement of the carcass wood causes the veneer to tear or lift, with sections sometimes becoming detached. If this should happen it is vital that the pieces are kept carefully, so that they can be replaced. The same applies to fragments from marquetry surfaces or inlays which may become detached through the drying out of animal glues.

Other typical dry air problems include cracking, loosening joints (again, due to dried-out animal glues), sticking drawers, and warped doors that no longer close properly.

POSITIONING FURNITURE IN A ROOM

Furniture should be positioned at least two feet from any heat source, and never directly in front of a radiator or heater. If the furniture has to be placed near a heat source then some sort of protection should be put in place, such as an insulated or reflective barrier. It is possible to ameliorate the risks to antique furniture from dry air damage by investing in a good humidifier. This will help maintain a constant level of relative humidity in the air during the winter heating season. For a normal comfortable, indoor
temperature you should aim to maintain 50–55% relative humidity. A cheaper alternative, but much less efficient, is a hang-on radiator humidifier, or even a bowl of water nearby, with a simple hygrometer to monitor the humidity in the room (see page 63 for humidifier supplier).

The sun is another problem and, whenever possible, furniture should be placed away from direct sunlight. A degree of light over a long period can mellow the colour of polished furniture attractively, but too much will dry it out, perish the surface polish and may lead to uneven fading. Where possible, turn pieces of furniture round occasionally to ensure an even fading process or use sun blinds to reduce the sun’s rays without loss of light. Alternatively, keep curtains drawn on sunny days when rooms are not in use.

POLISHING

Years of accumulated wax, dust, wear and ageing combine to develop a mellow protective skin on furniture, known as patina. It is almost impossible to counterfeit this sign of age and it should be preserved as part of the furniture’s history; radical treatment of the surface or repolishing should only be undertaken in exceptional circumstances, and always by a professional. Contact BADA for the name of a dealer or restorer who may be able to advise you as to the most appropriate course of action.

The surface of furniture should be routinely dusted with a soft cloth, and rubbed to preserve the lustrous surface. Once or twice a year polish thoroughly using a good beeswax based formula such as the BADA’s own recommended polish (see page 63). Lay this on sparingly, rubbing it in with a circular movement, and giving it a final polishing with a lint-free cloth. Take great care with fragile marquetry or inlaid surfaces, to avoid damaging or lifting the decoration by catching roughened areas on the cloth. While ormolu mounts or gilded parts should not be waxed or rubbed, a covering of polish can be a protection for brass handles. Never use spray polishes. Although these may give a good initial effect, they contain silicone which builds up a sticky surface, and a large proportion of spirit which evaporates quickly, taking with it some of the natural oils in the timber.
LEATHER SURFACES

Leather-covered furniture and leather desk tops can be revived with a lanolin-based leather dressing, or with colourless shoe cream, as long as the surface is not rough and broken.

CLEANING AND SPILLAGES

Surface marks such as food can be gently cleaned off polished furniture with a damp cloth or moistened chamois leather, while more stubborn dirt may be shifted with very dilute vinegar in water, as long as the polish is intact. Clean it off with another cloth damped with water and dry thoroughly with a cloth or kitchen paper. Wet marks or rings from glasses should be left to dry thoroughly before polishing with a clear wax. If a mark has gone white, it can be rubbed carefully with a little Brasso, again taking care not to damage the surface any further, and then wax polishing. Candlewax can be picked off hard surfaces when cold, or removed after warming with a hot water bottle.

Painted furniture, as long as the surface and the pigments are stable, can be cleaned with cotton wool swabs soaked in soapy water and then squeezed out. Rub very gently, changing each swab as it becomes dirty, and rinse with cotton wool squeezed in plain water. Once the surface is completely dry, it can be given a light coating of beeswax polish. Penwork, a watercolour technique with (almost always) a protective layer of varnish, can be treated in the same way.

Gilded furniture, including mirror and picture frames, should be dusted with a soft cloth or mop, or with a long-haired soft brush, and great care must be taken not to knock or damage details of the carving or composition, nor to rub smooth surfaces. Never attempt to clean gilding by wetting it or even dabbing it with a damp swab; this is likely to cause losses and damage to the surface.

BADA TIP: Sticking drawers or sliding doors may be eased by rubbing an old candle along the runners of drawers or in the grooves of the doors.
VIGILANCE

It is wise to make periodic inspections of furniture for lifting mouldings or veneers (which will sound hollow if lightly tapped), loosened or sprung inlays, wobbly joints, water damage or fresh furniture beetle (woodworm) holes.

WOODWORM

Woodworm holes with accompanying fine wood dust are likely to appear in late spring (particularly May or June) when the adult furniture beetle emerges, signalling the final stage in its life cycle. Infestation begins when the female beetle lays her eggs in the end-grain or other crevices in the timber. These hatch into caterpillar-like larvae that live for several years, burrowing into the wood and eventually (in the spring) pupating and emerging as beetles. As the beetles only live for a few days, they are not the problem so much as the larvae or grubs. Insecticide will kill these and at the same time act as a repellent to the egg-laying female insect. Use a proprietary woodworm treatment only on unfinished surfaces; the fluid can damage polish, paintwork or lacquer. Alternatively, Thermo Lignum (warm air) treatment is very effective (see page 63).

HANDLING

It should not need pointing out that all old furniture should be handled with care when being moved. Never drag a piece from one place to another, but lift it clear of the floor, if necessary with two people. Do not lift tables by their tops but with support under the frames; similarly, chests of drawers, desks and other case furniture need to be supported under the carcase. Chairs should always be carried by the seats rather than the backs, and must never be tilted by those sitting in them. Drawers with two handles are to be opened with both hands and not just one, and both lopers of a bureau should be used to support the writing surface. It is important to support the lids of chests and boxes when open so that the hinges are not strained.
REPAIRS

If furniture needs structural repair or restoration of any kind, it is important to go to a reputable restorer: BADA dealers will be happy to advise, and some who themselves carry out restoration are listed in the blue *BADA List of Members* (see page 63). Good restoration takes time and is unlikely to be cheap, but a botched repair will not last, is never satisfactory and will certainly reduce the value of your antique.

PAPIER MÂCHÉ

CARE AND CLEANING

Papier mâché was used for items of furniture such as chairs and occasional tables as well as a multitude of decorative items – tea caddies and all kinds of boxes, equipment for the dressing table or the desk, and trays. Examples from the middle decades of the nineteenth century are likely to have harder and more lustrous surfaces than those from the late eighteenth century and may be decorated with inlaid mother of pearl as well as painting. It should be kept in dry conditions, away from direct sunlight.

Ideally, papier mâché should only be dusted, and care must always be taken not to rub the painting or lift loose fragments of pearl shell. If the surface is intact but dirty, it may be cleaned carefully with cotton wool swabs dampened with soapy water and then rinsed off with well-squeezed plain water swabs. When thoroughly dry, a final polish with micro-crystalline wax will protect and give lustre to the surface.

The compressed paper body of papier mâché is susceptible to woodworm: if evidence appears, the best course is Thermo Lignum treatment. Liquid preparations are likely to damage the surface.
Clocks, watches & barometers

CLOCKS

GENERAL CARE

As with furniture, clocks need to be protected from direct heat and sunlight, extreme changes in temperature or damp conditions. Dust and dirt can clog and wear out their delicate parts, so they should be kept away from smoky fireplaces and dusty areas of the house as far as possible. Clocks generally do not like to be moved, and they should be kept on firm and level bases; long-case clocks may need to be fixed to the wall as well as being placed on a solid floor. If a bracket or mantel clock has to be moved, make sure the pendulum is immobilised first: many have a clip or hook on the back plate for this purpose. A weight-driven clock should have its pendulum and weights disconnected altogether before being moved, and if a long-case clock has to travel any distance, the movement should be taken out too. It is a good idea to seek professional help in setting up or moving a long-case clock.

WINDING

Antique clocks mainly fall into two categories – spring-driven and weight-driven; both are likely to have a pendulum. Either type will perform better if kept running, so regular careful winding (with the correctly fitting key) is essential. When winding a spring-driven bracket or mantel clock, hold it steady with one hand and turn the key slowly and firmly, taking care not to over-wind; some clocks have a stop which prevents more than four or five turns and is therefore a safeguard against over-winding.

BADA TIP: When you go on holiday, rather than leaving a weight-driven clock to wind down, it is best to stop the clock altogether by holding the pendulum still for a few seconds before you depart. Allowing it to wind down leaves the pendulum swinging without power, which can damage the movement.
A long-case clock may run for thirty hours or eight days. A thirty-hour clock will have one weight to operate the hands and the striking mechanism, and will be wound by pulling a chain inside the body, while an eight-day clock will have a separate weight for each function and is wound with a key inserted in the two holes in the face. To wind either type, open the door of the body to ensure that the weights do not foul the case or pendulum and then wind it slowly (or pull the chain downwards) until the pulley with its weight just reaches the seat board on which the movement rests.

When correcting the time on any clock, always turn the minute hand clockwise, and allow each strike to finish before moving the hand forward.

REGULATING

A pendulum clock will go faster if the pendulum is shortened and slower if it is lengthened, and on most examples this can be done by raising or lowering the bob by means of a nut (usually) placed just below it. Some pendulum clocks are regulated with a key inserted in the face (clockwise, faster; anticlockwise, slower) and others with a lever at the back; in these, faster or slower speeds are indicated with plus and minus signs.

MAINTENANCE

If they are kept in good condition antique clocks require little maintenance apart from occasional cleaning and oiling. Do not try this yourself, and never resort to sprays such as WD40. Light dusting is all that is normally
necesary for clock cases; do not use metal polishes, even on brass cases, and do not clean glass with proprietary cleaners. Never try to clean a clock dial yourself. Servicing, cleaning and any necessary restoration work should only be entrusted to a qualified horologist who specialises in antique clocks. Your nearest BADA clock dealer will normally be able to recommend a suitable craftsman.

WATCHES

CARE AND MAINTENANCE

Like clocks, watches need to be kept away from extremes of temperature and free of damp at all times, and are best kept running. To preserve them from dust, it is a good idea to store them in glass-topped display cases or in drawers; acid-free tissue is preferable to bubble wrap for long-term storage. Watch cases should be cleaned as rarely as possible and then only gently with a duster or (for silver examples) a long-term silver cloth; cleaning substances and water are to be avoided. Ideally, cotton gloves ought to be worn when handling valuable watches, to avoid acidic finger marks.

In maintaining watches, it is important not to over-wind them, and the hands must always be moved in a clockwise direction.

Never try to clean a watch yourself, but take it to a specialist recommended by a BADA member.

BADA TIP: Even if a watch is not in use, it is a good plan to wind it from time to time to keep the movement in working order.
MERCURY BAROMETERS

CARE AND MAINTENANCE

Because of their mercury content, these instruments demand special care. As mercury expands and contracts according to temperature, barometers should never be exposed to extremes. They must be kept free from any risk of dampness. When displayed, make sure they are securely fixed to the wall, and if in storage keep them in a box wrapped in acid-free tissue or a (clean) old sheet.

REMOVAL AND HANDLING

If a barometer has to be moved, because there are different types of tube you will need to take advice from a specialist about how and in which position you can do this. Avoid sudden jolts, which can break up the mercury or, worse, break the glass tube that contains it. If this happens, clear it up at once (but not with a vacuum cleaner or your bare hands) and put it into a closed container. As a precaution wash your hands thoroughly after dealing with the situation. Consult the BADA to find out how you can restore or replace the broken tube, which is often readily restorable.

PURCHASE AND SALE

In an attempt to restrict the uncontrolled disposal of mercury into the environment the general circulation of mercury in modern manufactured goods, including new mercury barometers, is now restricted within the member states of the European Union. However, the ownership and sale of antique mercury barometers is fully permitted without a licence, as the authorities recognize their cultural, historic and scientific importance, and the low risk these represent when treated with care by their owners.
CLEANING

Barometer cases need the same gentle attention as furniture: dusting and occasional polishing, with vigilance for any damage. If there is inlaid decoration, make sure that this is intact, and take care not to catch or lift it when cleaning. The glass should not be treated with commercial cleaners, but with a clean soft cloth or chamois leather. Stubborn marks can be swabbed with damp (not wet) cotton wool, taking care not to allow moisture to penetrate behind the glass. Do not try to clean the dial yourself, or carry out repairs to the mechanism. These are jobs for a skilled professional – we suggest you contact a specialist barometer dealer.

ANEROID BAROMETERS

CARE AND MAINTENANCE

The aneroid (literally, ‘liquid-free’) barometer was developed in the nineteenth century, at first for professional scientists, surveyors and engineers but later for domestic use, and by about 1900 it became the most successful form of barometer. It works by means of a small vacuum chamber which responds to changes in atmospheric pressure. More robust than mercury barometers, aneroid mechanisms were often fitted into wooden cases resembling the banjo shapes of earlier periods, sometimes with visible working parts. Others are set into mantel ornaments or simple brass cases; small portable examples for the pocket were also made.

Aneroid barometers should be cared for according to the materials of the cases, and with due attention to their situation: extremes of temperature or a damp atmosphere are to be avoided and wall fixings should be monitored to make sure they are secure. They should be moved with care, although their removal and storage position is less important than that required for mercury barometers.
Pictures

HANGING

Every picture that is hung on the wall should be given careful consideration regarding both the strength of the cord, wire or chain suspending it and the method of attachment to the work itself. Fixings should of course be appropriate for the weight and size of the work. Chains and supporting under-brackets may be best for very heavy oil paintings, while lighter works can be secured with wires or nylon cord. Hooks and rings should always be screwed to frames rather than stretchers or backboards, and while a single hook in the wall may be sufficient for light-weight items, it is advisable to use two for most pictures, both for security and to prevent them slipping askew. Whatever the method of hanging, all pictures and should be checked at intervals to make sure that the wall fixings remain secure and the hanging material is in firm condition.

Careful planning must also be given to the position of pictures in a room. Direct light is most damaging to textiles (see page 57), watercolours and other works on paper, but siting any picture in bright sunlight is risky, and placing them above heat sources such as radiators is always inadvisable. Damp walls and extremes of temperature are also to be avoided.

STORAGE

If pictures have to be stored, they should be kept in a clean, dry and preferably dark place, in an upright position. It is a good idea to raise them slightly on pads or blocks to ensure good circulation of air. The largest pictures should be stored at the back, and protruding hooks removed to prevent damage to neighbouring items; acid-free card or boards can be placed between each frame as further protection. The whole stack should be covered in a clean dust sheet. Unframed works on paper, such as drawings and prints, are best kept flat, interleaved with acid-free tissue, in drawers, acid-free boxes or folders.
OIL PAINTINGS

TROUBLESHOOTING

Because oil paintings are not usually framed behind glass, special care must be taken in preserving them from dust and dirt as far as possible. Paintings on wood are, in addition, vulnerable to damage from fluctuations in temperature and insect attack. It is therefore important to make regular checks of paintings at the back as well as the front; early detection and correction of problems can minimize them. A dry paint surface, cracking, tearing in a canvas, discolouration of varnish, worm holes in a stretcher or panel support are all indications that a picture needs attention. Do not try home remedies, but seek professional advice: a BADA specialist in oil paintings will be able to help.

BADA TIP: To allow circulation of air behind a picture, it is a good idea to fix pads of cork or corn plaster on the lower corners of the frame, to hold it slightly away from the wall.
The Royal Yacht Victoria and Albert II arriving in Antwerp 3rd February 1858 (detail), Richard Principal Leitch (c. 1827-1882), oil on canvas. Courtesy Atelier Ltd.
WORKS ON PAPER

All works on paper have special needs; some problems, such as the damage caused by sunlight, have been touched on above (page 26), but this needs emphasis, and other risks need to be mentioned. Whether used for drawings, watercolours, prints or books, the healthy survival of paper, or otherwise, depends upon its quality. Until the early nineteenth century paper was made from linen rags, and the cellulose content in linen meant that added chemicals were unnecessary: this type of paper is the most resilient. Paper made from wood pulp, as much was from the 1840s onwards, included lignin, an acidic light-sensitive substance which eventually turns the paper brown and brittle, while certain methods of sizing paper, and bleaching it, have also caused susceptibility to damage.

HANGING AND STORAGE

Because of their delicate nature, works on paper need to be protected from bright light of any kind and from extremes of humidity and temperature: 50-60% relative humidity and 20-22°C is ideal. Protection from ultraviolet light with special window film can be a worthwhile investment (see page 63). Valuable works should never be photocopied. Pollution in the air, and condensation inside a picture frame (causing foxing) are further risks. Always site these works on walls where direct sunlight does not fall. In addition, sun blinds or curtains drawn across windows are advisable, while individual curtains over particularly valuable works should be considered; in some cases ultraviolet-filtering picture glass or UVA Perspex may be used instead of conventional glass when framing (see page 32). However, Perspex should not be used with friable materials such as pastels or chalks, and it is important to bear in mind that it attracts dust and is easily scratched.

BADATIP: Periodically check that the gummed paper tape on the backs of framed pictures is properly sealing the gap between the frame and the backboard. If not, it should be replaced, as it provides vital protection from dust and insects.
FRAMING

Acid-free materials for mounting, whether for display or storage, are vital: lignin in paper, old backboards and mounts can leach through to works of art and damage them irretrievably, and should always be changed if found. Backboards of wood or non-acid-free cardboard should be replaced even if damage from them is not yet evident. Self-adhesive tape such as masking tape or Sellotape should never be allowed to touch the work itself, even the back, nor should the picture be in contact with the glass: use a mount or a fillet to separate them. Sticking a picture down on a backing board, and dry-mounting are to be avoided. Instead, it should be attached to its support with an acid-free paper hinge using PVA adhesive or bookbinder’s starch paste.

When choosing a picture framer, always make sure that conservation or museum quality products and methods are used. BADA members will be able to recommend appropriate craftsmen.

In addition to the general principles explained above, the attributes of drawings, watercolours and prints deserve special consideration, particularly with regard to conservation measures.

DRAWINGS

Drawings in crayon, pastel, chalk and charcoal should be stabilised to prevent accidental damage to the medium that might smudge or crumble if touched. This is emphatically a job for an expert picture conservator.

WATERCOLOURS

Fading of pigments is a particular problem with watercolours that are not displayed with adequate safeguards or stored correctly. The brown spots known as foxing, caused by damp conditions, can usually be ameliorated by
a professional conservator, but there is no remedy for fading. The most vulnerable pigments are indigo, vandyke brown and carmine, but damage to any of the colours can change the whole nature of a picture.

PRINTS & MAPS

These should be treated in the same way as watercolours, and any signs of damp or damage should be referred to a paper conservator immediately. It is recommended that unframed maps and prints should be stored flat in acid-free boxes or archival wallets, such as those manufactured by Secol (see page 64).
Ceramics & Glass

ANTIQUE PORCELAIN & POTTERY

A VARIETY OF MATERIALS

All ceramics are made from types of clay, fired in a kiln; most are glazed and some have applied, painted or gilded decoration. They range from true porcelain, or hard paste, fired at a high temperature, to earthenwares, stonewares and unglazed biscuit or terracotta, fired at lower temperatures; these are less resilient. Soft-paste porcelains, made in Europe during the eighteenth century in imitation of Chinese hard-paste porcelain, are also low-fired, and delicate. Bone china, developed in the late eighteenth century, is a form of translucent porcelain that includes bone ash, china clay and china stone; it became the standard English porcelain body in the nineteenth century. Treatment and care of all these materials must take their varied nature into account.

GENERAL CARE

Whenever possible, antique ceramics are best kept behind glass, where they can be seen in relatively dust-free conditions and rarely disturbed. Plastic coated or acrylic (rather than metal) display fittings should be used. If a large or valuable item is to be displayed on a shelf or a piece of furniture, it is a good idea to set it on a soft mat of felt or leather, which can absorb any vibrations and protect the furniture surface. Fine ceramics should not be kept in strong sunlight or damp storage conditions.

When handling pottery and porcelain, always hold an item by the main part of the body, never by extremities such as handles, and take great care with loose parts such as lids. Sellotape should not be used to attach these: peeling it off can damage enamelling or gilding. It is better to attach such separate pieces with Blu-Tack.
CLEANING

Very dirty porcelain and bone china can occasionally be immersed, one item at a time, in warm water to which has been added a dash of washing up liquid. A towel laid in the bottom of the sink or washing up bowl is a useful protection. Use a soft sponge or cotton cloth to swab each piece clean, and a soft brush to remove dirt from crevices in relief decoration or sculptural items. After washing, dry the pieces carefully with a lint-free cloth (a fine linen glass cloth is best), and use a hairdryer for sculptural parts.

Abrasive cleaners or household bleach should never be used, nor should antique wares be placed in a dishwasher. Soft-paste porcelains and pottery, being more porous, should be cleaned with a soft damp cloth. If it is necessary to immerse these, the water should be luke-warm, and the item should not be left to soak. Similar care is needed with unglazed wares or unglazed parts such as footrims, which should be cleaned with minimal use of water. Items with ormolu or other metal enrichments and those with old rivets should not be soaked either.

STAINS

Stains can sometimes be removed with cotton wool swabs soaked in a 20 volume solution of hydrogen peroxide or Steradent denture cleaner; leave the damp swabs in place for an hour or two. However, this treatment must not be used on or near painted or gilded decoration.

REPAIRS

As an organic material, a ceramic body is only stable while it is intact. Breakages may result in minute changes to the shapes of the damaged

BADA TIP: If flowers are to be arranged in an antique vase they should be placed in a separate container, set on a pad, within the antique piece.
pieces and this can make repairs excessively difficult. It is therefore advisable always to seek the help of a professional china restorer in repairing precious items. In the event of a breakage, be careful to gather up all the pieces, however small, and keep them together in a box, wrapped in acid-free tissue paper, before taking them to the restorer.

GLASS

GENERAL CARE

Antique glass should be protected in a cabinet if possible, and this should be away from direct sunlight. Damp is to be avoided too: this can cause white cloudiness which can only be remedied by professional buffing.

CLEANING

Most glass can be washed, in the same way as porcelain, in warm water with a little washing up liquid. Drain each item on a towel: do not drain drinking glasses upside down on a bare draining board, as this can scratch the rims. Dry carefully with a fine linen or cotton cloth while still warm, and make sure that the insides of decanters are well dried, if necessary with a hairdryer. Never put old glass into a dishwasher.

Iridescence in ancient or formerly buried glass should be treated carefully. This, as well as damaged or ‘crizzled’ glass, ormolu-mounted, enamel-painted or gilded glass should not be immersed in water, but can be cleaned carefully with swabs of cotton wool damped in soapy water. Do not be tempted to clean old glass of any type, including stained, leaded and mirror glass, with commercial cleaners: they can do more harm than good, and are unnecessary in any case.

Staining of decanters is a common problem. Dark stains can sometimes be removed with a good bottle of bada tip: Always store empty decanters with their stoppers out, as these vessels are especially vulnerable to damp, which can cause unsightly white cloudiness to the inside surface.
brush (preferably with a tuft at the tip to avoid scratching) soaked with warm water and washing up liquid. White stains may be caused by deposits of calcium carbonate from hard water. If washing does not help, try leaving colourless vinegar or a solution of denture cleaner in the vessel for twenty-four hours. Never try to clean any glass vessel with sand or lead shot: this old ‘remedy’ will cause scratching and possibly irreparable damage.

REPAIRS

Minor chips on wine glasses can be eliminated, but only by reduction of the glass, so this practice should be restricted to glasses of comparatively low value. Chips on important period glasses can normally be filled with a colourless synthetic resin that is relatively inconspicuous. Again, professional help is required through a specialist BADA member. As with ceramics, all fragments from breakages should be carefully assembled in a box, wrapped in acid-free tissue and taken to a professional restorer.
Ivory, bone, mother of pearl and tortoiseshell

CARE AND CLEANING

Although from entirely different sources, these are all natural materials requiring gentle care and non-invasive cleaning. They should be kept in moderate temperatures and away from direct sunlight; ivory and bone in particular should not be stored near strongly coloured materials or near direct heat. Place a small cup of water close to ivory pieces when stored in cabinets, as this will help to keep them in a sufficiently humid environment.

None of these materials should be immersed in water, but they can be cleaned with cotton wool swabs soaked in warm soapy water and thoroughly squeezed out, or with damp cotton buds. Do not apply this damp treatment to painted or gilded areas, and take special care with any inlaid decoration, to avoid catching or lifting fragments. Any damage should be repaired by a professional conservator: a BADA member will be able to recommend one.

Inlaid ivory, bone or mother of pearl in furniture can become grimy with polish and dust. Such discolouration can sometimes be shifted with a cocktail stick. Alternatively, dampen a cotton bud in white spirit and work it over the dirty areas, carefully avoiding the surrounding timber or other material. Mother of pearl and tortoiseshell may also benefit from a gentle treatment with the mildly abrasive metal cleaner, Prelim (see page 63).

As a final dressing, ivory and tortoiseshell may be wiped over with almond oil to give a lustrous surface; microcrystalline wax is also a suitable finish for both these materials.
Jewellery

A RANGE OF MATERIALS

All jewellery, be it modern or antique, needs care and consideration in its handling and use. Awareness of the many different materials and techniques involved is important in giving the correct care to individual pieces. For example, stones such as pearls, opals and turquoise are porous, so they should not be immersed in water; nor should marcasite, coral, ivory or tortoiseshell. The colour of turquoise, coral, ivory and shell cameos can be changed by over-exposure to heat or strong sunlight; hot water as well as a hard knock can fracture brittle opals, emeralds, rubies and sapphires, while all precious stones and metals can be scratched by diamonds. Many precious and semiprecious materials can be chipped, scratched or rubbed by careless treatment, and although gold and platinum do not tarnish, silver does, and the surface of silver gilt, rolled gold and chrome plating can be rubbed off by wear or overzealous cleaning.

STORAGE

For the reasons just described, it is important to store jewellery in separate padded cases or in compartmented rolls made of soft materials, rather than jumbled together in a crowded box. If necessary, wrap individual items in acid-free tissue. Do not use cotton wool, baize, felt or chamois leather for wrapping jewellery or silver, and never let elastic bands come into contact with silver. Make sure that the jewellery is stored away from sunlight and direct heat.

GENERAL CARE

Make-up, perfume and, above all, hair lacquer, are very damaging to most jewellery: the chemicals in them can dissolve pearls, and will certainly deaden the sparkle of diamonds and other precious stones; they can stain the metal in gold or silver settings. If using any of these cosmetics, always apply them first and allow them to dry before putting on jewellery.
It is as well to make regular checks of all jewellery: stones can work loose and settings may be damaged or distorted by catching on clothes; necklace stringing can wear out or become frayed, and chain links, especially of gold, which is soft, tend to wear thin. Always make sure that catches, clasps and fixings are strong and secure.

CLEANING AND REPAIRS

Obviously very precious or rare and delicate items should be professionally cleaned, but some jewellery can benefit from gentle cleaning at home. Most hardstones (and open settings) can be washed in warm soapy water, brushed with a soft toothbrush to remove the dirt, and then dried carefully with a cloth, absorbent kitchen paper or a hair dryer on a low setting. When washing jewellery, be sure to use a bowl without a plug hole.

Do not immerse porous and other delicate materials such as pearls, opals, turquoise, marcasite, coral, ivory and tortoiseshell, or necklaces and bracelets strung with silk or cotton; jewellery with enclosed settings should not be washed either, as the water can penetrate behind the stones. All these can be cleaned with a fine rag or cotton bud damped in soapy water, and buffed with a jeweller’s cloth or chamois leather.

Nearly all antique jewellery made before the last half of the nineteenth century was set with stones with closed backs which had metal foils which were intended to enhance the appearance (especially the colour) of the stones. For this reason one cannot reliably value the stones themselves in their original settings but the art of the jeweller in successfully foiling the stones (or glass) was highly prized. It is very important that this type of jewellery is never immersed in water or other liquid, which will invariably seep through to the foil backing and render it dull, lifeless or distorted to the point of ruin.

Most BADA jewellery dealers can undertake cleaning of jewellery, and can give advice about repairs.

BADA TIP: Before washing up always remember to remove from your hands any jewellery set with opals, pearls, turquoise, emeralds, rubies or sapphires. Water is absorbed by the first three and if it is very hot could cause fracturing to all these materials.
Precious metals

Broadly speaking, the so-called precious metals comprise gold, platinum, silver and plated wares, with the various combinations of these.

GOLD AND PLATINUM

Gold is a soft, malleable metal that does not tarnish, and throughout history it has been regarded as the most precious and sought-after of materials. It is usually alloyed with other metals to make it harder and more robust for working and to give tonal variety, notably in jewellery, but thin layers of gold applied over other metals, wood, plaster, ceramics and glass, or embossed on leather, have been favoured techniques in the decorative arts for hundreds of years.

Platinum, discovered and developed more recently, embraces a group of hard white metals that are also resistant to tarnish and corrosion. Platinum has been used in jewellery since the late nineteenth century, both on its own and as an alloy.

GENERAL CARE

Although gold needs no cleaning as it does not tarnish, its use in the form of a thin skin of gilding on various other substances, including silver, gives both richness and delicacy to many kinds of objects. In these cases it needs particular care for its preservation; gilding can be scratched or rubbed all too easily by careless handling or over-zealous cleaning. Objects of silver-gilt can be washed carefully in warm water and carefully dabbed dry. Gilt bronze (ormolu) is more problematic as it is often used for fittings such as drawer handles and may have a worn or damaged surface which should not be wetted: light dusting is all that is needed. Never apply metal polishes or cleaners to ormulu or other gilt surfaces. Gilding on wood or gesso, for
example on mirror or picture frames, should never be wetted either, but only dusted (see page 16).

Platinum, like gold, does not need polishing. In its pure form it is almost always used as a setting for jewellery so it should be treated in conjunction with the other materials with which it is made up.

**SILVER AND PLATE**

**SILVER CONTENT**

Pure silver, although not as soft as gold, is a relatively soft and malleable material, so in its use for vessels, cutlery and other items it has usually been alloyed with a small proportion of another metal (or metals) to give it strength and resilience. Some modern pieces are made from ‘fine silver’ which has a particularly high silver content. Although this is less liable to tarnish it is softer than most traditional silver and needs careful treatment. Silver is, of course, recognizable by its hallmarks, which also indicate its date and place of origin.

Many techniques of decoration have been applied to silver, including engraving, etching, embossing, repoussé, casting, piercing and granulation; it can be set with enamels or gems and, as already indicated, it is sometimes covered with a layer of gilding. More recently, matt, satinised and faceted finishes have been introduced.

Sheffield plate, introduced in the mid-eighteenth century, and electroplate, which superseded it in the mid-nineteenth, involved fusing a thin layer of silver over a base metal. Copper was the underly-ing metal for Sheffield plate, and nickel silver or Britannia metal for electroplated wares.

**BADA TIP:** Always remember to thoroughly wash silver or silver-plated cutlery that has been in contact with egg, brussels sprouts, vinegar, salt and even chlorinated water as soon as possible after use, otherwise it will tarnish rapidly.
Rare Queen Anne thistle cup, Robert Bruce. Edinburgh, 1702–03. Courtesy Nicholas Shaw Antiques
CLEANING

Ideally silver and plated wares should be polished as rarely as possible. Silver polishes are abrasive, and over-conscientious cleaning has been responsible all too often for wearing away engraved decoration, making holes in embossed work and eroding the surface of Sheffield plate. It is better simply to wash precious metals in hot soapy water, rinse in hot water and dry thoroughly before buffing with a soft cloth.

Of course washing will not remove tarnish, for which there are various commercial products available, including impregnated cloths, creams, foam paste and liquid polishes. Silver dip is useful, and can be wiped onto large objects, but do not re-use it more than a few times: silver particles collect in the jar and can be deposited on the surface of other items and damage them. The best option is long-term silver polish which leaves a protective layer on the surface. Do not put silver into the dishwasher, or use metal polishes designed for copper and brass; never try to clean silver with abrasives such as wire wool.

When cleaning or polishing silver, do not work on a hard surface, but support the piece in your hand or on your lap, and work gently in circles. Use a soft brush to clean and polish relief decoration, taking care to remove dirt or silver polish from crevices or chasing; again, it is important to work in a circular motion and not in straight lines.

STORAGE AND HANDLING

To preserve the polish and prevent tarnishing on domestic silver wrap it in dry, acid-free tissue paper and put it into cotton or Tarnprufe bags. Keep it away from pollutants such as smoke or household paints, and do not allow it to come into contact with rubber, newspaper, wool, felt or velvet. Ideally, silver and plated wares should not be stored in oak furniture, which is acidic. When handling silver, it is a good idea to wear cotton gloves, to prevent acid finger-marks.
Base metals and domestic metalware

BRASS & COPPER

CLEANING

While very heavily tarnished or damaged pieces should be cleaned and repaired professionally, routine cleaning and polishing at home can be undertaken. The several proprietary brands of brass and copper polish on the market usually contain ammonia, so it is best to avoid these, and instead use Prelim (see page 63) and apply using soft materials such as cotton-wool or Duraglit wadding and remove with a yellow duster. Avoid using any abrasive products such as emery cloths or wire wool which will scratch the surface patina and greatly reduce the value of an old piece. As with silver, polishing should only be carried out occasionally. Washing in a weak solution of washing up liquid and a light buffing with a soft cloth should be all that is necessary generally to maintain a good surface. A long-term silver cloth can also be used for reviving the surface of brass and copper, but it is important to use a different cloth for each type of metal.

It is advisable to avoid cleaning brass handles on furniture but instead apply furniture wax to the surface of both wood and metal, finally polishing with a duster.

PRESERVATION

Although in theory a lacquer coating itself does no harm and can preserve the shine of these metals for a few years, if a lacquered surface is scratched corrosion of brass may then occur. So lacquering is not suitable for all items and should in any case be undertaken by a professional. A coating of microcrystalline wax polish is a useful protection for the surface of brass and copper, and this can be applied at home.
It is essential that all copper cooking utensils which are to be used for their original purpose in preparing food and drink should have undamaged tin linings. Jaeggi’s in London offer such a re-lining service (see page 64).

**PEWTER**

**GENERAL CARE**

Pewter is an alloy of tin combined with varying quantities of other hardening metals such as copper, lead, antimony or bismuth. Modern pewter is lead free. Some alloys of antique pewter are particularly vulnerable to scratching, denting and bending and are also sensitive to acidic materials, which can cause corrosion.
CLEANING

Pewter can be washed in warm water with either soap or detergent and then dried thoroughly. Microcrystalline wax polish is a good way to finish the cleaning process. If the surface seems to need more than this then professional advice should be sought.

Similarly, repair of dents or splits should be undertaken only by a metal conservator. Contact the BADA for the name of a suitable person to carry out this work.

IRON AND STEEL

CARE AND CLEANING

The inherent problem with both iron and steel is their tendency to rust. For this reason, objects of these materials should be particularly safeguarded from dampness. Pollutants can also be damaging. Iron and steel should be cleaned with methylated spirit rather than water or, better still, with the specially formulated non-scratch metal cleaner, Prelim (see page 63). Superficial rust spots (on steel knives, for example) can be cleaned with very fine wire wool or a nylon pot scourer moistened with oil. Microcrystalline wax (see page 63) is recommended as a protection for both types of metal. Ironwork that is kept outside should of course be painted.

For information about antique bronze, lead and spelter please see page 51 (Sculpture & architectural items)
Sculpture and architectural items

Common sense should assist in the care of these, sometimes surprisingly fragile, materials. With outdoor objects think about where you position them – not in locations fully exposed to the elements, not near gutters where water damage could occur. Think about frost and if this might cause damage. Again, with indoor sculptures think about temperature, therefore avoid putting objects near heat sources such as radiators or open fires. Rooms such as conservatories and bathrooms which are damp can also have an adverse effect. If in doubt ask a professional.

MARBLE AND STONE

GENERAL CARE

Natural materials such as marble and stone are porous and therefore prone to damage from dirt, smoke, rust stains, damp and spills such as wine, tea or coffee. Dust is most effectively removed with a vacuum cleaner fitted with a clean soft brush rather than a duster (which can rub the dirt further into the surface), taking great care not to scratch smooth areas or knock the decoration on, for example, a carved fireplace. Unstained marble can be polished with microcrystalline wax to seal and protect the surface. All stains are best cleaned by a specialist conservator; never try to tackle them with detergents or bleaches.

Alabaster, soapstone and onyx are softer and even more vulnerable than marble, so should be treated with special care when cleaning and polishing, as above. In addition, alabaster is damaged by heat, so lamps of this material should always be fitted with cool light-bulbs.
ANTIQUE BRONZE, LEAD AND SPELTER

GENERAL CARE

Most bronzes only require an occasional dusting, and care must always be taken to preserve patinated surfaces – avoid using abrasives, which could damage the character (and value) of your sculpture. If cleaning of stubborn dirt is required, a soft toothbrush and good wax furniture polish may be the solution for non-patinated items. Dip the brush in the wax and work it around the detailed areas to lift the dirt, finally buffing with a soft cloth. Over larger, smoother areas the wax can be applied with a cloth and later polished with a clean duster; a soft shoe polish brush can also be used for crevices and areas of high relief.

Bronzes and spelter figures indoors should never be washed with water, as this could damage the patination or cause corrosion. Lead, however, can be gently cleaned with dampened cotton wool. Microcrystalline wax can be a useful protection for the surfaces of all these materials as long as they are unpainted. Any damage or corrosion should only be corrected by a professional conservator.

GILT-BRONZES, TERRACOTTA AND PLASTERS

For gilt-bronzes, terracotta and plasters also contact a professional conservator through your local BADA dealer or your local museum conservation department. This applies to other materials such as ivory, bone and wax.
Carpets, tapestries & textiles

CARPETS & RUGS

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

If possible, antique carpets and rugs of significant value should be used in parts of the house where they are likely to receive the least heavy wear, for obvious reasons. If you need to subject them to hard use, make sure you choose examples of lesser quality or those that are damaged already. Extremely precious examples should be hung on the wall, like tapestries, and not walked upon (see page 55).

No carpet or rug should ever be placed directly on a hard floor without an underlay of some description. Underfelt acts as a protection against unevenness and prevents dust from rising between gaps in floorboards, as well as giving resilience and softness underfoot. If there is any question of dampness in a floor, use a layer of moisture-proof paper as a membrane beneath the underfelt, to guard against rotting of the carpet fibres.

An underlay should always be cut to the precise size of the carpet or rug for which it is intended. On close-carpeted floors, rugs can be placed upon a non-slip type of underfelt that can obviate the problem of creeping. Rugs and carpets should not be anchored down with heavy pieces of furniture or fixed in place with nails or glue. If a carpet or rug has to be placed under a heavy item of furniture its feet should be padded. Do not be tempted to pull out the corners of a carpet to straighten it: this can distort the shape, especially of flatweaves.

Try to avoid excessive sunlight on carpets and rugs; it is a good idea to turn them round from time to time, to guard against both fading and excessive wear in one part.

BADA TIP: Never fold a carpet or rug when storing or transporting it, but roll it round an acid-free tube, with the right side out. The tube should have as wide a bore as possible and be slightly longer than the item to be rolled. A plastic pipe may be the answer, or a cardboard tube covered in tinfoil.
CLEANING

Dust and dirt are, of course, the great enemy of all textiles, carpets and rugs, being particularly susceptible to the corrosive effects of grit ‘walked in’ among the fibres. Regular cleaning is therefore essential. An old-fashioned carpet sweeper is a good tool for this, but a vacuum cleaner with low suction power is also suitable. Whatever method you choose make sure the movement is parallel to the shorter side and that you are sweeping in the direction of the pile. This should avoid sucking at the corners or ends and does not cause ripples in the rug that require pulling out. Take extra care not to catch any loose threads on the edges or damage the fringes.

Robust items small enough to be lifted without difficulty can be hung, face down, over a washing line and tapped, but not beaten hard, with a carpet beater on the back, but do not try this with very old or fragile rugs. Never shake them, as this strains the warp threads. It is good practice to clean the backs of all rugs and carpets from time to time, either with a carpet sweeper or vacuum cleaner. Radical cleaning should only be carried out by a specialist conservator, and all seriously valuable or fragile items should be professionally cleaned every three to five years.

REMOVING SPILLAGES & STAINS

Spills and stains should be given first aid as quickly as possible. Reduce moisture with kitchen paper or a clean absorbent cloth and then dab the spot with warm water and mild washing up soap (no detergent), working in the direction of the pile. For red wine spillages see the adjacent BADA tip. Urine should be wetted with soda water and blotted dry with kitchen paper or a towel. To remove grease and wax, place a clean sheet of blotting paper or kitchen paper above and below the mark and iron it with a warm iron; repeat this with clean sheets of paper until all the grease disappears. Chewing gum can be cooled and hardened sufficiently with ice wrapped in a polythene bag to be lifted off the fibres.

BADA TIP: Red wine spills can be covered in salt while damp, and left to dry before vacuuming; alternatively, douse with boiling water and blot with absorbent paper or cloth.
Old stains are more difficult, and should only be tackled by a professional. Do not attempt to remedy such problems with dry cleaning fluids or chemical stain removers: they are likely to damage the natural dyes and spoil the colours.

**REPAIRS**

If damage is discovered in a rug, it should be given immediate attention; delay can result in further deterioration to the fabric with consequent loss of value and extra repair costs. If minor repairs are undertaken at home, they should be carried out with a needle and thread, never with adhesives, but it is always better to seek professional advice.

**TAPESTRIES AND WALL HANGINGS**

**DISPLAY AND MAINTENANCE**

When heavy fabrics are hung, adequate support is crucial to avoid straining and stretching and consequent damage to the materials. Correct hanging also reduces damage from the atmosphere, insects and dirt that can also affect the foundation. Tapestries and textile wall hangings should be lined, and they should be suspended away from the wall to allow circulation of air and to avoid contact with any dampness; they should not be kept in bright sunlight or under spotlights, nor above radiators and other heat sources.

The best hanging method is with some form of tape, sewn to the top edge, which enables the weight of the piece to be evenly distributed. Velcro is useful for this. The fluffy side should be sewn along the top edge, through both the lining and the textile itself, and the prickly side fixed to a batten on the wall. This system allows for weighty items to be hung easily and removed without distress, and prevents sagging or looping. Curtain rings are not advised, as they can cause strains and uneven pulling on the threads of fragile textiles.
STORAGE
As with other textiles, tapestries should never be folded. If they have to be put into storage, they should be rolled, with the right side outwards, in the same way as carpets and rugs (see page 52).

CLEANING AND RESTORATION
As far as possible, tapestries and other hangings should be displayed in clean conditions with a minimum of dust. They can be lightly brushed, in situ, with a feather duster or mop, but better still with a low-suction vacuum cleaner with the nozzle covered in gauze or fine net (an old nylon stocking is ideal), taking great care not to catch any loose threads or cause damage to weakened areas.

As with all textiles, advice about cleaning and restoration should be sought from specialist members of the BADA or from textile conservators.

ANTIQUE TEXTILES
CARE
Textiles are the most easily damaged of all materials, being susceptible to dirt, pollution, light, heat, damp and insects, as well as hard wear and careless handling. From all these they must be protected. Low light, with damp-proof and dust-free conditions for display are vital, while great care (and considerable space) is needed for storage.

STORAGE
Always use acid-free tissue paper for wrapping, and for padding folds. Avoid folding whenever possible, and instead roll suitable items on tubes,
either of plastic covered in acid-free tissue, or cardboard wrapped in tin-foil. In either case use acid-free tissue to cover and interleave the textile as it is rolled.

Stored items should be protected with cotton or linen bags rather than polythene, which attracts dust and can seal in moisture. If storage boxes are used, those made of acid-free card are ideal, but lining recycled boxes with acid-free tissue is an alternative. Tapes should be used for tying up, rather than string or elastic bands. If using moth-repelling substances, do not allow them to come into direct contact with textile materials.

**COSTUMES**

Costumes can be hung up, supported on thickly padded hangers of slightly narrower width than the shoulders, and protected with linen or cotton bags or well-washed old shirts. Alternatively, and especially if they are very heavy or fragile, store them flat with tissue protection for the folds; do not pile them too high or weigh delicate items down with heavy costumes on top of them.
DISPLAY

Displayed textiles such as samplers and embroideries should be protected behind glass, with acid-free mounts or fillets to keep them from touching the glass itself, and the backs of the frames sealed against insects and dust. For heavier items, like tapestries, that are designed to be hung on the wall see page 55.

CLEANING AND REPAIR

Many textiles such as lace, whitework embroidery, muslin baby clothes, cotton or linen underwear, table- or bed-linens, if they are in reasonably robust condition, can be hand-washed in lukewarm soft water and a gentle washing soap: do not use strong detergents or biological washing powders. Rinse thoroughly and allow the items to dry naturally. Coloured textiles such as furnishing fabrics or curtains may also benefit from washing in this way, but it is important first to make sure that the colours are fast. Find an unobtrusive section that includes all the colours in the fabric, and dab with wet cotton wool: if any colour appears on the cotton wool, do not attempt washing.

Stains on old textiles are best left alone (or to experts), and they should certainly not be cleaned with proprietary stain removers or bleach. Do not attempt to wash or otherwise clean delicate materials such as silk, coloured embroideries, needlework with metal threads or painted fabrics but seek the advice of a specialist textile conservator. BADA members in this field will be able to help.

BADA TIP: It is best to attach labels or other items by sewing them; while stainless steel pins should not cause harm, staples or old steel pins may become rusty so must not be allowed to come into contact with textiles.
Antiquarian books

CARE AND STORAGE

Many of the caveats regarding the care of furniture, as well as works on paper, can also be applied to old books. Wide variations of humidity and temperature must be avoided: as well as the simple expansion and contraction which can damage or break the joints of leather bindings, the different materials used in them will move at different rates, often leading to serious problems of warping.

LEATHER BINDINGS

The most delicate part of the construction of a book is the joint or hinge, which not only takes the load of the opened cover, but is also the thinnest and least reinforced part of the leather. The joints in particular suffer from drying out, the first symptoms of which are small areas of friable and usually white damage. To minimise this and other problems of a dry atmosphere, a regular but not obsessive application of a mild leather dressing such as Marney’s Conservation Dressing or British Museum Leather Dressing (marketed as Pliantine) is recommended for smooth leathers (see page 63). Always try it out on an inconspicuous area of the book, applying it very lightly at first, and take care not to rub gold tooled decoration. Never use such dressings on soft surfaces with a suede-like finish, nor on vellum or parchment.

SHELVING AND STORAGE

Problems of excessive humidity are usually all too evident, but beware of made-to-measure shelving which can often cover damp walls: it is quite common to find a library of books which appear fine from the spines, but where all the fore-edges have BADA TIP: When shelving books, do not allow them to lean at an angle, which can twist the bindings more or less permanently.
been badly stained by moisture, often with resulting fungal problems. If the worst happens, and books become flooded, the best first aid is to place them in the deep freeze until professional help or guidance is available.

Buckled pages and turned down corners of books should be carefully straightened out, and any paper clips, pins or staples removed. Enclosures such as letters or newspaper cuttings should not be laid between the leaves of a book. If they cannot be kept elsewhere and are thin enough not to strain the binding of the book, they should be put into an acid-free envelope and laid between the cover and the end paper.

LIGHT

The least understood enemy of books is light. Not only does over-bright natural light fade books, but it also accelerates the drying process, which can be minimised by ultra-violet resistant films applied to windows (see page 63), or by keeping curtains closed on bright days.
HANDLING

When it comes to handling a book, always support the front cover when open, and do not leave it dangling. Never pull a book off a shelf by putting a finger on the top of the spine. Most leather bindings are not harmed by averagely sweaty hands, but be careful with nineteenth century cloth bindings and twentieth century dust-jacketed books. For these it is sensible to follow the example of the trade and cover them in loose jackets of a stable transparent material such as Mylar or acetate, which is available in rolls from graphics supply stores. Secure these jackets simply by folding the material around the fore-edges of the books, to allow some circulation of air under the material, and do not use any adhesive or tape, even on the outer jacket itself, for it is likely to stain the opposite endpaper.

REPAIR AND REBINDING

If the covers of a book come off, or pages become loose, do not attempt a repair without proper training. Most adhesive tapes and many types of glue are inimical to books, and it is far better to preserve a book in pieces for restoration later than to bodge a repair, no matter how well intentioned. Damaged books with loose pages should be protected with acid-free card and tied with tape until they can be taken to the binder or conservator.

CLEANING

Books should be dusted regularly as dirt can collect on the top edges and work down among the pages causing stains and discolouration. A soft brush such as an old shaving brush is suitable for this, but a small handheld vacuum cleaner is even better, if available; cover the nozzle with fine net or a nylon stocking. Taking one book at a time and holding it by the fore-edge, brush or vacuum the tops of the pages downwards from the spine. Books should never be banged to remove dust: this will damage the spines.
Useful products & suppliers

Products or services mentioned in this guide may be obtained from the following suppliers, contact details for which are given on the next page.

PRODUCTS

Archival paper & card products; print or drawings wallets
Secol or Conservation Resources UK Ltd

BADA List of Members
BADA or BADA stands at fairs

Copper pan re-lining service
Leon Jaeggi & Sons Ltd

Furniture polish (BADA wax furniture polish)
BADA or BADA stands at fairs

Humidifiers, dehumidifiers, mobile air conditioners
The Air & Water Centre

Microcrystalline wax polish
Conservation Resources UK Ltd

Marney’s conservation dressing (for book bindings)
Maggs Bros Ltd

Prelim metal cleaner
Conservation Resources UK Ltd

Pliantine (British Museum Leather Dressing)
Conservation Resources UK Ltd

Thermo Lignum woodworm treatment (chemical-free)
Thermo Lignum UK Ltd

UV filtering Perspex and glass for pictures
Conservation Resources UK Ltd
SUPPLIERS

The Air & Water Centre (J S Humidifiers plc)
Artex Avenue, Rustington, Littlehampton, West Sussex BN16 3LN
Telephone: (01903) 858657 • www.airandwatercentre.com

BADA
20 Rutland Gate, London SW7 1BD
Telephone: 020-7589 4128 • www.bada.org • info@bada.org

Conservation Resources UK Ltd
Units 1, 2 & 4, Pony Road, Horspath Industrial Estate,
Cowley, Oxfordshire OX4 2RD
Telephone: (01865) 747755 • www.conservation-resources.co.uk
conservarts@aol.com

Leon Jaeggi & Sons Ltd
77 Shaftesbury Avenue, London W1D 5DU
Telephone: 020-7434 4545

Maggs Bros Ltd
50 Berkeley Square, London W1J 5BA
Telephone: 020-7493 7160 • www.maggs.com • enquiries@maggs.com

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Howlett Way, Fison Industrial Estate, Thetford, Norfolk IP24 1HZ
Telephone: (01842) 752341 • www.secol.co.uk • sales@secol.co.uk

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19 The Grand Union Centre, West Row, Ladbroke Grove
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