

Exceptional Arts and Crafts secretaire secured for Blackwell

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Thanks to the support of the National Heritage Memorial Fund, this important piece of furniture has been saved from significant risk of private ownership and removal from public view.

Image



Blackwell, the 'Arts and Crafts' house in the Lake District, was designed by architect Mackay Hugh Baillie Scott as a holiday home for the Holt family. Completed in 1901, it is the only residence designed by Baillie Scott that is open to the public.

When Lakeland Arts acquired Blackwell in 1999 no Arts and Crafts furnishings remained, but today the organisation cares for a small but significant collection of Baillie Scott furniture.

The secretaire (a writing desk) had been on loan to Lakeland Arts and displayed at Blackwell since 2011. In 2019, due to unforeseen circumstances, it became at significant risk of being removed not just from Blackwell but from public display entirely.

Thanks to a £16,700 grant from the National Heritage Memorial Fund, and additional support from the Art Fund and a private donor, Lakeland Arts was able to acquire this important piece of history and keep it on public display at Blackwell.

Inlaid with wood, ivory and pewter, the secretaire is an exceptional example of Arts and Crafts design. It observes the principals of unity of form and function, outstanding craftsmanship and designs taken from nature.

The piece is particularly significant as it's the only known physical example of its design printed in Baillie Scott's furniture catalogue *The Pyghtle Works*. Skilled workmen produced the catalogue under Baillie Scott's direction, as part of his aim to make the Arts and Crafts style more accessible to a broad audience. Very few pieces of furniture from *The Pyghtle Works* are represented in public collections today.

The secretaire will be displayed in Blackwell's Arts and Crafts bedroom from Tuesday 18 May. [Find out more about the piece.](#)