

The Lady Carew Tapestries

Julia Letheridge was born in Canada, spent time as a child in Persia and eventually married Robert Carew, who became the 3rd Baron Carew when his father died.

Lady Julia Carew was one of the finest embroiderers of her time; she and her sister went to the Royal School of Art Needlework in London where she learned her craft.

The School was started in 1872 with the hope of returning embroidery as a major part of the decorative arts, alongside furniture, rugs and carpets, ceramics, and tapestry work.

As well as being a fine craftswoman, Lady Carew also collected jewellery, some of which had belonged to Catherine The Great of Russia! These are now at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London as part of their jewellery collection.

Lady Carew spent many hours working on her pieces, she said she found it a calming influence away from the 'bustle and fatigue of everyday life'.

The pieces we have at Hartlebury Castle (the chair covers and long embroidery) date from the early 1900's, but we do not know how they came to be here. We understand that the embroideries were found in the attics in the 1960's and they were then made into the chair covers.

However, sunlight and wear and tear over the years have greatly damaged the original works, and so the chair covers you can see today on display are copies made by the Art Society of Worcester and Malvern.

Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust are very grateful to them for all their hard work in reproducing the embroideries.

Now you have learned a bit about the Carew Tapestries, why not design your own chair cover? See our activities page on our website.

We'd love to see your pictures!