



Victorian Furniture

1830-1901

19th Century

Victorian Furniture 1830-1901

- Queen Victoria became Queen at 18yrs old in 1820.
- Queen Victoria identified herself with the middle class. She spent some time at the Pavilion and had it refurbished.
- Victorian furniture is popular today, probably due to it's accessibility more than the aesthetics.
- Wood used were mainly flame veneered Mahogany, Burr walnut, Rosewood & Ebony.
- Profile edges were round, handles were turned.
- Features became plain.



Mass Production

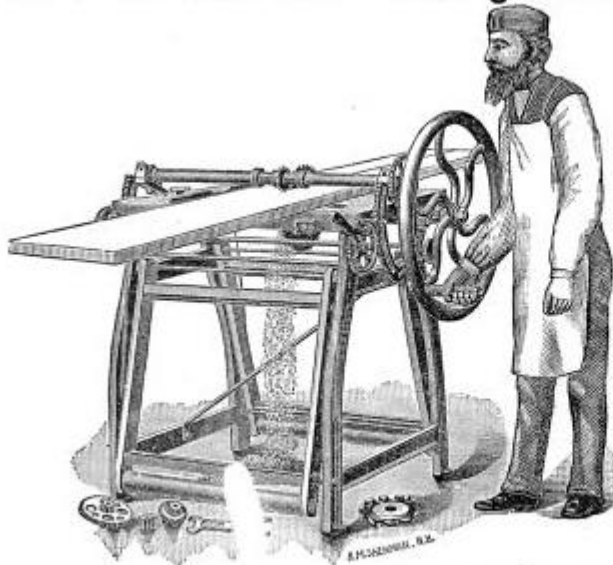
- Mass production using machines led to vast quantities of Victorian furniture being manufactured.
- There was a big demand by the ever-increasing middle class population for this type of furniture.
- Furniture history changed forever through the Victorian period. It became desirable to have a home laden with furniture to show your status to your peers.



Victorian Machines

- Machines started to replace hand labour, the beginning of the industrial age.
- This in turn created a large gap between the designer and the craftsmen. The factories had changed, the designers no longer had direct contact with the customer.
- The demand for furniture was high, the factories were manufacturing at a fast pace, and a frantic rush for the designers to keep ahead of each other resulted in poor quality design

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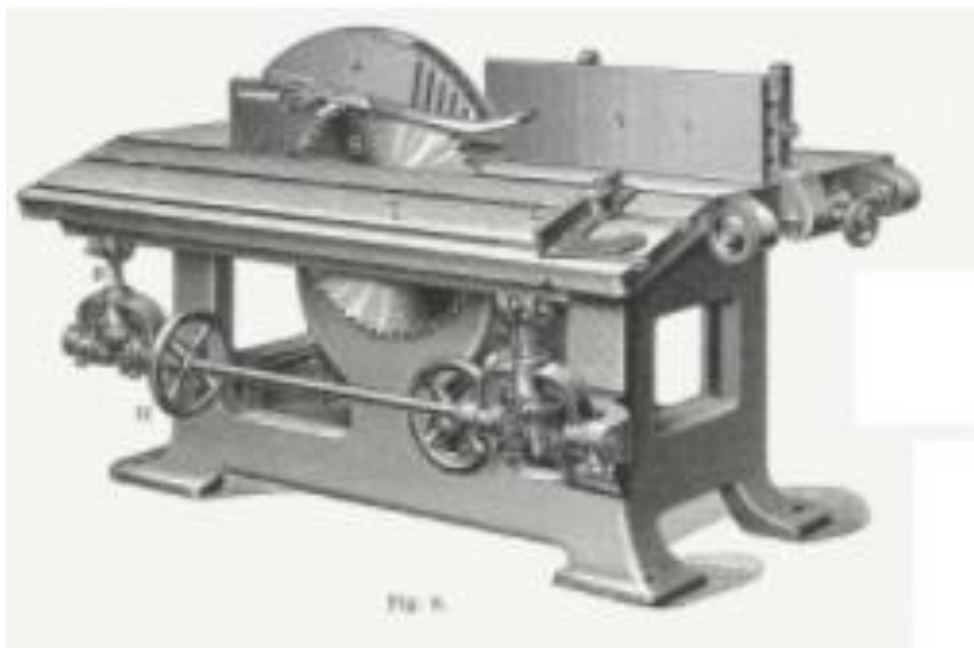
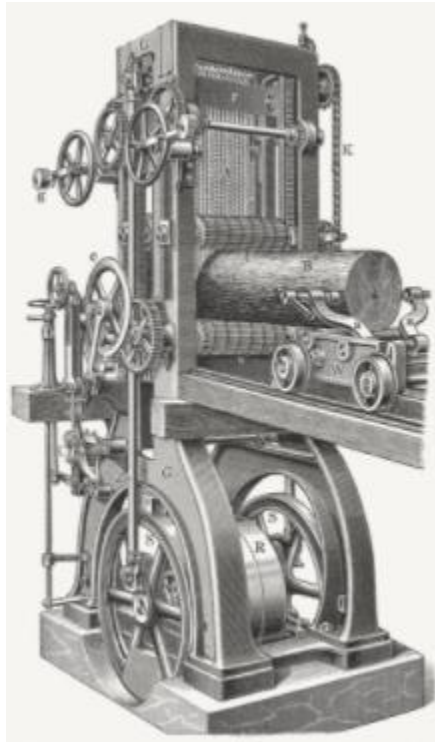
Ad from May 1887 "Carpentry and Building"

Victorian Machines

- New machines were introduced to speed up manufacture. They soon began to take over most of the work and the furniture started to be designed around what the machine could make, therefore the quality of design declined.
- At this stage circular saws, planers and band saws were introduced. Many machines were horse driven, water driven or even man powered.



Electric Powered Motors



Overview of Victorian Furniture

- Overall the Victorian period saw the introduction of labour saving machinery which was misused due to high demand which caused a serious deterioration in design and construction.
- The Grecian lines of the Regency Period were replaced by showier furniture with plenty of curves.
- This showier furniture after 1850 led to low prices and poor construction and workmanship that was often hidden by veneer and applied ornament.
- The poorly made furniture drew attention to the merits of 18th Century furniture and led to the practice of purchasing second hand furniture and the antique shop began.

Task

- Carry out a quick Internet search to see if you can find the following:
- Balloon & spoon back chairs
- Thonet's steam bent chair no 14
- Victorian Ladies easy chairs
- Chesterfield Suite
- Chiffoniers
- Papier Mache chair
- Ottomans
- Smokers bow
- Work table
- Loo table
- Sutherland table
- Telescopic table
- Military desk

Examples of Victorian Furniture

- Cumbersome furniture, dust catching carving.
- Buttoned upholstery – armchairs frequently with low arms scrolled at the front.
- Balloon & spoon back chairs



Examples of Victorian Furniture

- Thonet's steam bent chair.



- Victorian Ladies easy chairs without arms because the vastness of the skirts.
- Later Victorian easy chairs Sometimes had a small drawer fitted in the front to hold a spittoon.



Examples of Victorian Furniture

- Chesterfield – fat layer of well sprung upholstery named after the Earl of Chesterfield.



- Chiffoniers used in dining and sitting rooms.



Features of Victorian Furniture

- Papier Mache chair. Boxes and trays. Papier Mache was applied over a wooded frame for chairs.



- Ottomans used in rooms which had bow windows or circular ends and picture galleries.



Features of Victorian Furniture

- Smokers bow for houses, barbers shop, cottages and offices.



- Work table for games and sewing. Reflects Louis XIV (14th) style.



Features of Victorian Furniture

- Whatnot suited the over furnished rooms
- Loo table named after the fashionable card game.



- Sutherland table – a cross between a gate leg and Pembroke table very narrow, failing in proportion.



Features of Victorian Furniture

- Telescopic table – strong steady table with bulbous turning. Solved the problem of leg room.



- Sideboard contained back piece of mirror – mass produced in 1840.
- Military desk – designed in three parts for travelling, sunken handles.

