

RESTORATION OF BARON VON BEHR'S FAMILY SIDEBOARD AT POPE MANOR

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INTRODUCTION

The sideboard was created in the second half of the 19th century. Size: length 233 cm (surface of the bottom section), depth 77 cm (in the middle part of the surface of the bottom section), height, with the coat of arms, after restoration - 288 cm. It consists of three large sections - the bottom section with shelf compartments, the top with serving boards, the middle section with a support function (four turned supports), as well as a top section with shelf compartments, above which there are turned decorative elements with wood-carved décor also blended in - Baron von Behr's family coat of arms in the central section. The casing of the sideboard is made of pine, while the façade sections are made of oak. There are locks for locking the doors and drawers, the lock holes of which are hidden by decorative bronze lining. The locks serve as handles for opening/closing the doors; lining with handles were used for the drawers.



Fig. 1. Sideboard prior to restoration. Photo: Aigars Pilenieks



Fig. 2. Sideboard after restoration at Pope Manor. Photo: Roberts Grinbergs

CONDITION BEFORE RESTORATION

The condition of the sideboard prior to restoration was poor - the compartments in the upper part of the sideboard had been used as chicken coops, whereas the compartments in the lower part were used to store chicken feed. There were a lot of wooden parts missing from the sideboard, shelves, ledges and back walls on the interior. In the façade section, profile strips, sections of panelling, one of the serving boards, turned details, various decorative elements and their parts, as well as the linings and locks on the key holes were missing. The most important missing element was Baron von Behr's family coat of arms which was missing from the upper central section of the sideboard.



Fig. 3. 20th century photo of Pope Manor Hall. In the left corner the sideboard. Photo: The Scientific Archive at the Rundale Palace Museum.



Fig. 4. The lower part of the sideboard before the restoration, the decorative moldings have disappeared. Photo: Aigars Pilenieks



Fig. 5. The back of the sideboard before restoration, inappropriate materials incorporated over time. Photo: Aigars Pilenieks



Fig. 6. Damaged sideboard locks before restoration. Photo: Aigars Pilenieks



Fig. 7. The process of gluing the structure of the sideboard. Photo: Aigars Pilenieks



Fig. 8. New profile strips have been incorporated. Photo: Aigars Pilenieks



Fig. 9. The process of making the missing turned part. Photo: Aigars Pilenieks



Fig. 10. Missing turned part was made. Photo: Aigars Pilenieks



Fig. 11. The newly made coat of arms of the Barons von Bear. Photo: Aigars Pilenieks

RESTORATION

The restoration of the sideboard was commenced by cleaning it. This was followed by the fixation of places where there were missing elements, the doors and the shield with turned details, while sections of panelling and profile strips were disassembled. All of the loose wooden details were reglued, with work done in parallel on the stabilization of the construction, as the corner joint tabling had become unstable over time due to the heavy weight. All of the missing wooden details were made and installed. The renewal of hinges, locks, and handles was undertaken, and keys were made.

The reconstruction of a missing element was undertaken - Baron von Behr's family coat of arms, taking other coats of arms from Baron von Behr's family as the basis. Some have still been preserved in different places (for example, at the Pope Evangelical Lutheran Church, Edole Castle and elsewhere). A bear is portrayed in Baron von Behr's family coat of arms.

The final work involved the toning of details, the laying of a layer of decoration and assembly.