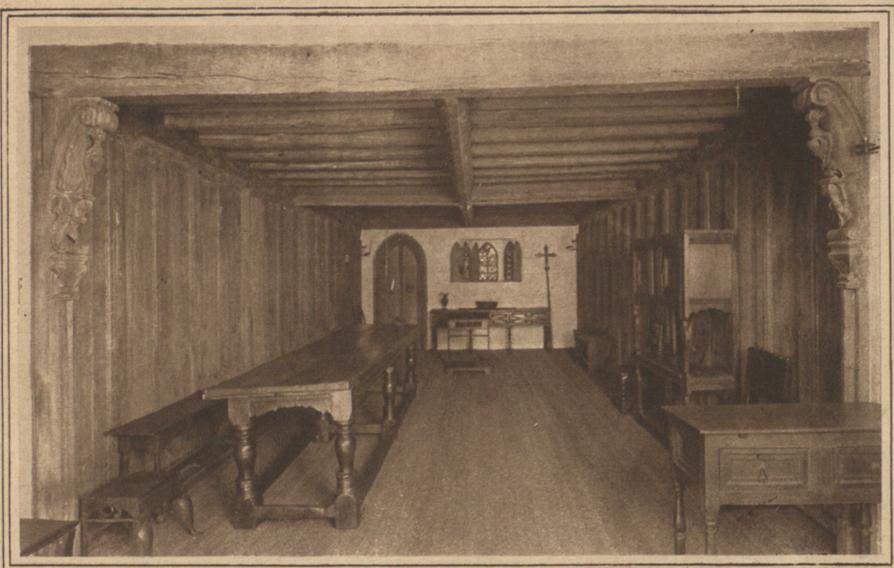


# The present vogue of the old-time dining alcove and refectory table brings us an echo of the hearty good cheer of Elizabeth's England

Read "The Passing of the Old-Fashioned Dining Room," by Miss Elene Foster, if you would like a glimpse of the pleasant informality of the new-old style. See The Tribune Institute, Page 8, Part IV.



Old oak paneled room, showing the refectory table.

This refectory of a seventeenth century monastery has been transported bodily,—wainscoting, beams, furniture and all,—to a New York antique shop. From the Gothic door and windows at the end of the room to the long refectory table moved close to the bench along the wall, it is a perfect reproduction of the original room. Also it gives more than a hint of the possibilities for friendly conviviality that lurk in this communal form of dining table.



Refectory dining table and benches in a New York living room.

Book shelves and a fireplace, with refectory table and cushioned benches in a cozy corner, make this a delightful hybrid living and dining room. The table and benches are usually kept close to one of the walls, but can be moved about at the convenience of the hostess to best serve the convenience of her guests.



Jacobean joint stools, from Arthur S. Vernay. These old oak stools are marvels of joinery as it was practised in days when men took genuine pride in their craft and furniture was intended to last for generations. They accommodated the guests who sat around the big dining tables, and between times were securely nested in the ample space under the table. Whether in banquet hall or coffee house, these stools were omnipresent, for the heavy high-backed chairs stood for dignity rather than convenience. The turning on the legs of these old stools and tables is interesting, for it was all done by hand, and the design in each case expresses just what the joiner had in mind for the decoration of that special piece of furniture.

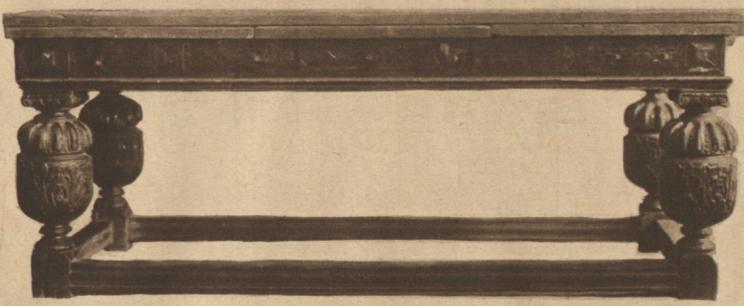


Elizabethan draw leaf table, from Arthur S. Vernay.

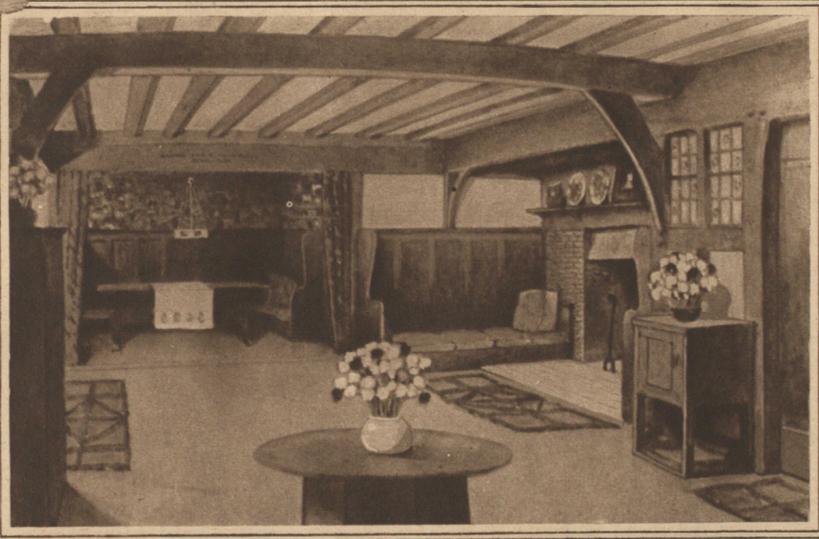
This old oak dining table, which was made somewhere about the year 1600, proclaims the Elizabethan era as loudly as if it wore a ruff and a farthingale. In fact, it would require no great stretch of imagination to picture its sturdy legs incased in the latter. Its weight, elaborate carving and the ample bulbousness of its underpinning proclaim it to be a very dignified table indeed,—one which must have groaned under the weight of enormous banquets. When these parties were select, the table was left as you see it here; when more guests were invited, the heavy under slabs were drawn out at the ends, nearly doubling the spread of the top. It is the direct lineal ancestor of our own extension table.



Paneled room, refectory table and benches from The Hampton Shops. Formality at one of these refectory tables is as impossible as ceremony around a camp-fire. Whether it is dinner that is served, or merely afternoon tea, a corner like this is a place to linger long and happily. It means more than just table and benches; it means an atmosphere of easy-going comfort and conviviality that is half the social battle anywhere.



Jacobean gate-legged table, from Arthur S. Vernay. The utmost dignity to which this fine old piece of Elizabethan craftsmanship could aspire was a position in the keeping-room of a prosperous farmhouse, where in off hours it stood against the wall with its legs modestly folded under the skirts of its down-dropped leaves. When drawn out and spread to full capacity, it served to hold the plates of bread and cheese and foaming tankards of ale which were regarded as a light afternoon refreshment, or accommodated the good woman's work-box or darning basket.



The house place in "White Nights," a country house, designed by Mr. Ballie Scott. A perfect example of the idea, now dominant in English domestic architecture,—the large irregular room in which there is always a sense of something just around the corner. The modern house place, like that of olden times, is the gathering place of the whole household. The chimney nook, with its deep settle, offers the perfection of home comfort, and the dining recess concentrates in one charming whole the pleasant sociability of living room and dining room.



Welsh dresser of the Jacobean Period, from Arthur S. Vernay. This old Welsh dresser, made of oak in the days of Shakespeare, is aristocratic only because it is old. In its prime it was a sturdy, self-respecting yeoman among furniture,—the pride of some well-kept kitchen, where it held the store of pewter and lustre that were the family treasures. It is a fine example of individuality in design and workmanship, in the age when decoration was spontaneous instead of pattern-made.