

The Empress



THE EMPRESS OF INDIA & CO

THE IMPERIAL DURBAR

HALF ANNA

TOOTING TRADING CO

TOOTING TEA & TONICS

THE DURBAR

EMPRESS OF TOOTING

EMPRESS EXPORTS

BOMBAY MIXED

CHAI BOY

PACHISI

TIFFIN & TONIC

BABDOBAST

BARRA TRADING CO.

JOHN COMPANY

LANCE DAFFADAR

SIRKAR & SONS



Company Office



Henry in the Garden



House Exterior



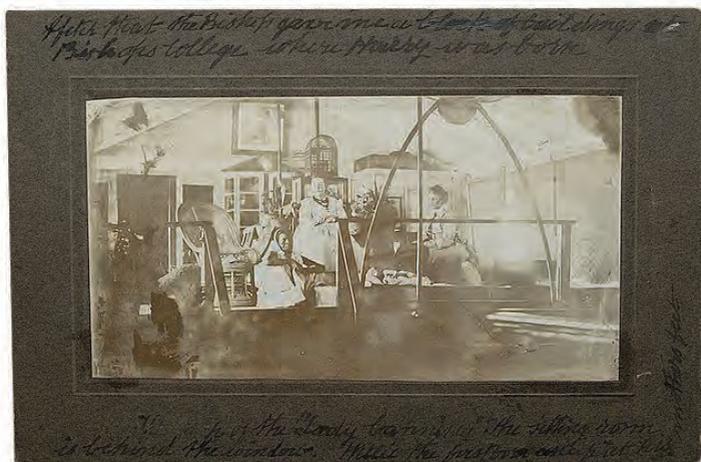
Gathered for Durbar celebration



Home with George



The Story



Our family arrived late summer in 1875. I remember coconuts, rice, bougainvillea stretching up the sides of buildings and the Kolis fishermen. The nearly debilitating heat; the colours, much more vivid than those in Britain, and the foreign smells that would shape my childhood abroad. While amongst all of these exotic goods I reveled in a sense of discovery; I missed those events and objects that had been such familiar hallmarks of home. Several months after our arrival, Queen Victoria visited for the Imperial Durbar - as I child I remember looking up as she passed by and wondering what she thought of this strangely beautiful and mysterious place.

We became members of the English expatriate community; my father making acquaintances through his work, my mother through various social organizations. Our house, with its verandas, spiral iron staircases and goldfish swimming in pale blue ponds could have been a great source of excitement for a young boy; and it might have been for me, had I not found my father's work place so engaging.

It must have been the bustling atmosphere and the mix of people - mainly English and Indian but sometimes Portuguese or French. The loud voices and various accents carried thought the rooms. And the rooms, the rooms themselves! Such a mix of textures and scents, nook and crannies to hide - the variety of games and crates and goods piled high.

Most people entered Empress Trading Co though the front door - and even for them, with just the shop floor available to view, they still marveled. For, even to a grown man, there was a certain instant nostalgia a box of treats from the England could bring to someone so far from home. In addition to the teas, spices and coffees (a collection of the Empire's best), the shop sold a variety of sundries; thus welcoming a variety of patrons. They chatted at the front counter to Mr. Sinai or sat in the booths along the side wall enjoying their tea and delicacies with one another. When they left, they went with parcels wrapped in paper and tied with a simple twine bow tucked under their arm.

For me, the shop was just the beginning. I would rush past the doors, to the much larger area dedicated to pursuing my father's vision of a grand trading company. First, there was the hallway where workers checked in, picked up their laundry and often times grabbed a drink. Unlike the shop, it much more chaotic -- a scene of rough wood, metal and loud voices. Dodging in and out of the hubbub I would sneak into my father's office where giant maps covered the walls -- the illustrated world blending with the vivid foliage he had installed. Despite the fact that there was relatively little furniture, just his large desk and a couple of chairs, the combination of all sorts of printed matter and greenery gave the room a sense of fullness.

Nothing, of course, could compare to the store room next door. Bins, crates and cans housed all sorts of goods for sale or distribution. The room always smelled of dark wood, tobacco and tea and it seemed there was a constant presence whispering in the corner. For a more inclusive conversation, I would head to the mess hall. Here, employees and managers would join together for meals or games - or perhaps, on a quick break, just a cup of chai. The furniture was mis-matched, a combination of what had been supplied and what people had brought from home. An arm-chair sat next to a travelling trunk that served as a make-shift coffee table. Communal dining tables next to lockers were filled with intimate objects.

And so it was here, not travelling the country nor studying back home, that I learned about India, about England, and indeed, about the world. My childhood was a series of over-heard snippets and interludes amongst our workers, patrons, deliverymen and passers-by. My childhood took place amongst the expansive backdrop of colonial India but it seemed as if the very axis of the world was within the walls of The Empress Trading Co.

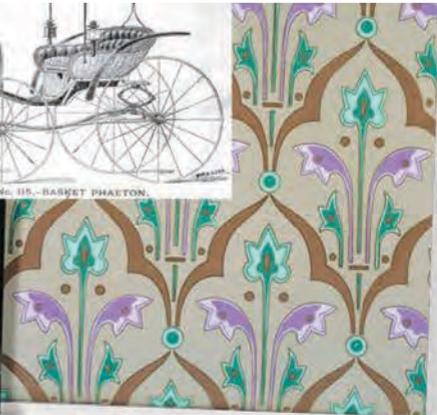
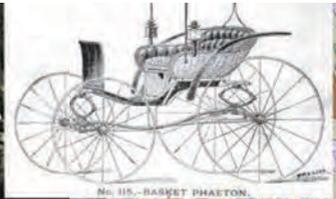
Victorian England



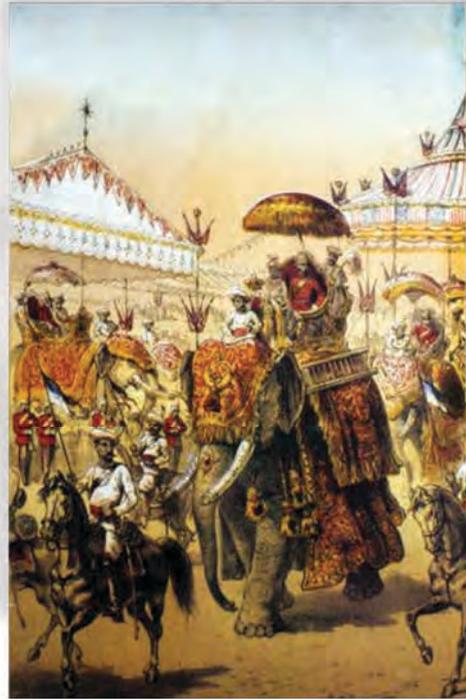
3107. Room in which the Post was born



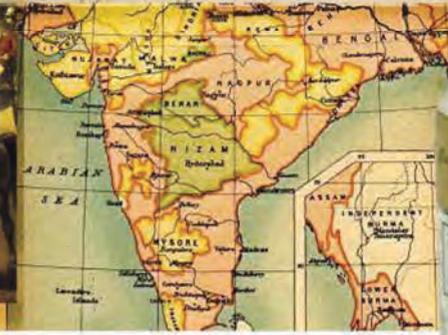
"Do not to let your feelings (very natural and usual ones) of momentary irritation and discomfort be seen by others; don't (as you so often did and do) let every little feeling be read in your face and seen in your manner . . ."
 Queen Victoria



Imperial India



Young Cheetah - India



Palkee - Träger

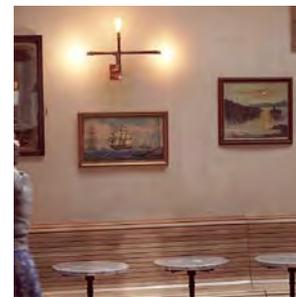
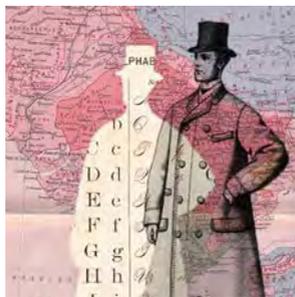
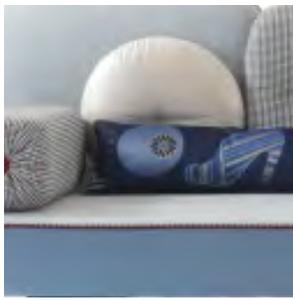
*Oh, East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment-seat,
But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face, though they come from the ends of the earth!*
- Joseph Rudyard Kipling



LES JARDINS DU GRAND MOGOL









DAVIDS TEA
Organic Silk Dragon
A magical scent
Made from premium organic tea
our Silk Dragon is a unique
red dragon treasure. It is
highly-blooming variety of
gathered in the morning of
next cool air day, in the
evening, when the flowers
burst open and release the
scent, they are dried with
the tea until midnight, then
is repeated with fresh leaves
over the course of five days,
infusing the tea with a warm
regional flavour.



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The Rooms

The Store



The front-of-house, where over a century ago, patrons frequented the trading company's store not only to buy goods but also converse with those in the community. Shelves stocked high with products tempted customers as they perused a myriad of goods; the local, those of the mother country and the entire empire side-by-side.

Natural fabrics and finishes of yesteryear are refashioned and re-interpreted in this colonial outpost. Rope and burlap intermingle with bronze and stainless steel metallics that hint of the industrial back office. Modern tea and coffee display packaging illustrates the journey from vintage to contemporary.



Enter the Back Office



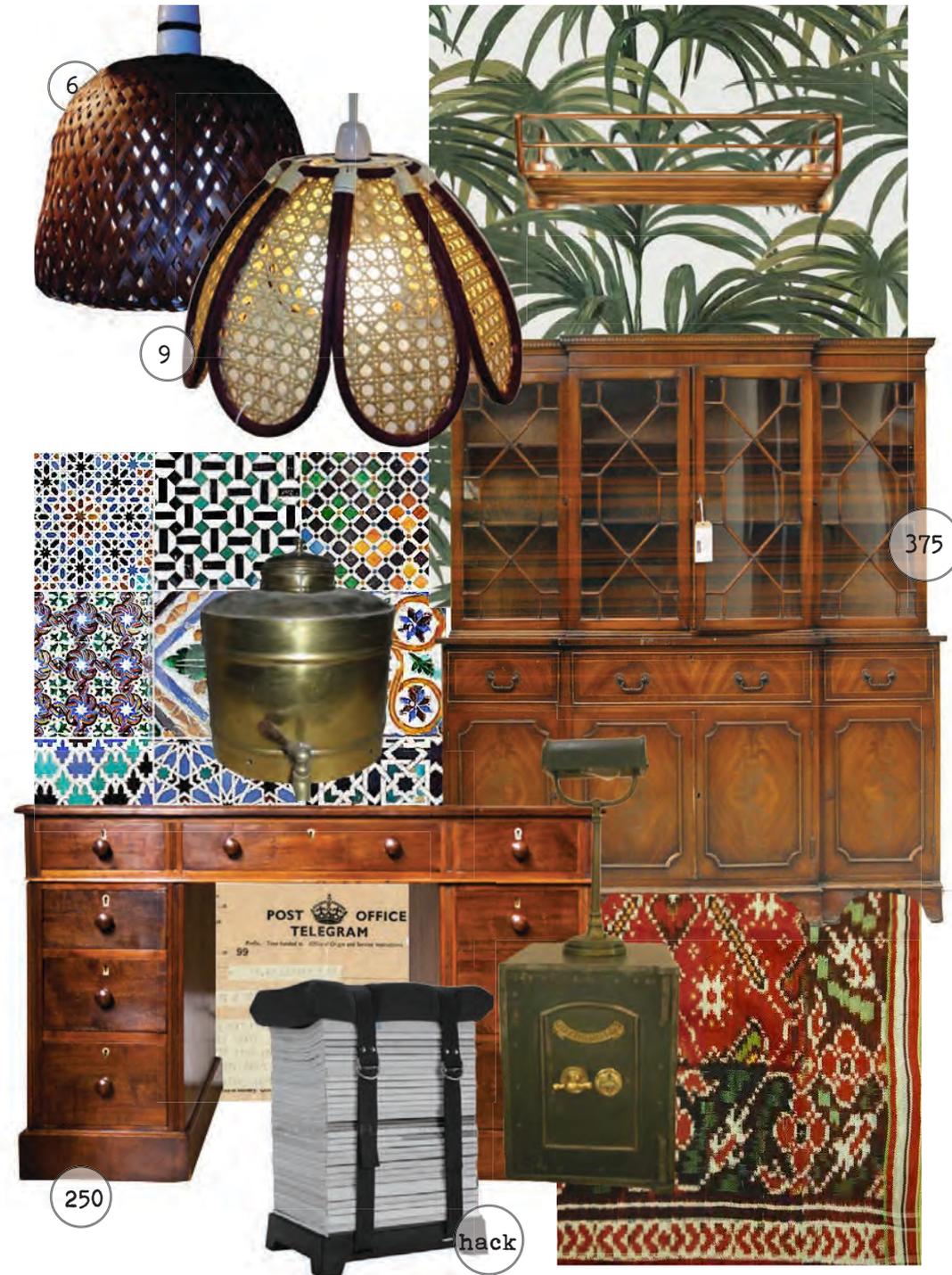
Punch in and grab a drink at the water cooler. When employees walked through the door they gathered here. Yes, it was a place to pick up your laundered uniforms and linens but it was also a place of information. One would check a book out of the company library, catch up with co-workers and read the latest company bulletins. Then, depending on your station, it was one final check in the mirror before you stepped into the store to meet and greet or you headed on to the workshop floor.



Manager's Office



Mr. Methwold was an interesting character, rather than a traditional office, he embraced the surrounding landscape and turned his lair into part exotic conservatory and part humming HQ. Wood tones, rattan and exotic wallpaper exude a life of managerial majesty. Pomp and circumstance and all things British reminded him of home while the company memorabilia and strategic documents set the course for expansion across the Indian terrain and further afield. His family photos adorn the desk and a cut glass bottle of Madeira -- shared amongst friends and foes alike-- beckons from the vanity.



The Store Room



Filled and fortified, this well stocked room provides a cosy refuge, a place to sneak off for a break from the excitement of the buzzing floor. Or perhaps, it was where people went to create their own, private, excitement. Rumour has it that the major domo entertained his mistress by candlelight, certain that their secrets would stay safe behind the confines of these atmospheric walls.

Barrels served as tables and a small collection of mismatched chairs provided seating. Decoration was limited to the functional, rope, cans and storage boxes dot the intimate interior.



The Mess



A communal and convivial area, in the Mess workers swap stories of the day. The management table sits separate from the staff, but all sup under one roof. All would gather together, to play a game of Parchesi or Carrom, while warming themselves over a glass of steaming Chai.

Industrial and reclaimed furniture evokes a refractory, while coloured accents and seating soften the tone and evoke a convivial dining experience. The addition of an employee lockers, contents undisturbed, and a few travelling trucks turned into makeshift tables adds an unexpected touch and reminds of those here before us.



The Offerings



Day Beverages

Restoratives to balance your day. For example Turmeric Chai Tea, for detoxification and cleansing properties.

Tea displayed in large tins adds to the "general store" aesthetic. Branding is discreet and references 19th century packaging with a modern twist.

Flowering teas displayed in large Samovars

'Over the Cup' brewers that dispense brewed tea by placing on cup and pushing down.

Coffee cocktails; coffee Old Fashioned (sub coffee for the whisky)

In addition to typical UK espresso offerings, Indian Coffee could be served. (Two tier filter jug made of brass or stainless steel. A measured quantity of hot water which is poured over the plunger, filters through the coffee powder and drips into the lower unit, creating the decoction).





Night Beverages

Tonics to invigorate your evening.

Infused cocktails: Tea, Cucumber, Spiced Fruit.
Could be served out of water coolers.

Custom Bitters; potentially a house-made bitters
tasting flight served with gin so customers can
create their own flavour profiles.

Cocktails made with preserves (to serves as part of the mixer)
similar to Madame Geneva in NYC. Could be served in Mason Jars.

Punch cards to serve as bar tab; referencing the narrative.

Bloody Mary Bar on Sundays.

Shots served in 'potion' bottles; speciality shots could be pre-
mixed.





Nosh & Naans

Anglo-Indian bar snacks served in multi-layer Tiffins.

Bar snacks with an Anglo Indian spin, for example Bombay Mix or speciality bar nuts with custom spice mix.

Individual jarred chutneys and cheese plank pairings. For instance, a house Piccalilli served with robust Montgomery Cheddar.

Small themed finger sandwiches evoke the tradition of high tea service. On point offerings include Coronation Chicken or Curried Slaw served on Indian Bread/Nann or similar.





Games & Events

Vintage games, such as the Anglo Indian hybrid known as 'Carrom', a "strike and pocket" table game similar to billiards and shuffleboard. Invented because English colonists missed billiards and needed something more transportable.

Snakes and Ladders, which originated in India as part of a family of dice board games that included Gyan chauper and pachisi (present-day Ludo and Parcheesi). The Government of India site credits the invention of the game to the 13th century saint, Gyandev. The game, they say, was originally called Mokshpat; with the ladders representing virtues and the snakes representing vices.

Foosball, although out of context, is placed to represent the team spirit of company.

Special events nights could include a new Durbar (for the opening) and traditional events such as Diwali.





MacGuffins & Vignettes

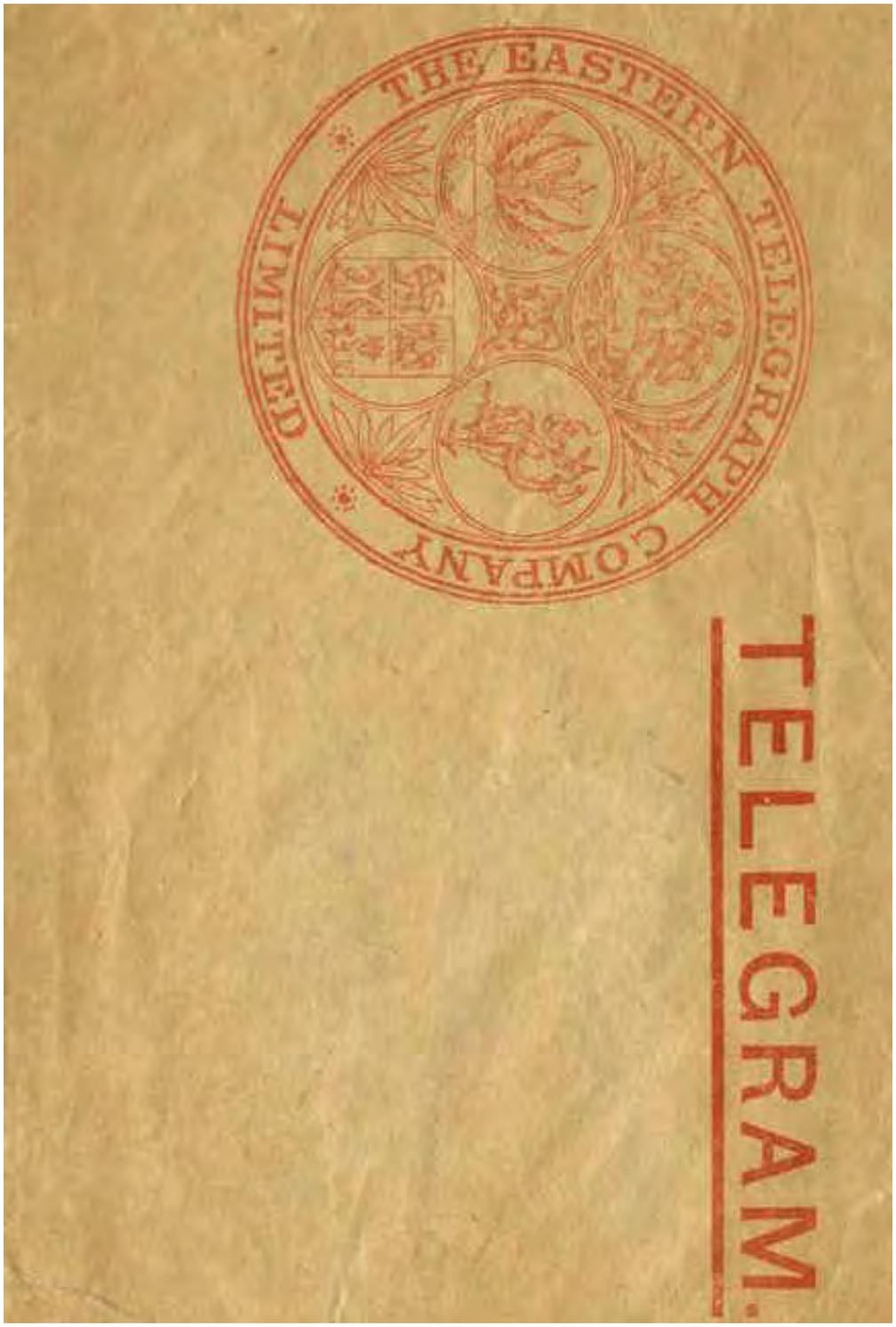
In fiction, a MacGuffin is a plot device in the form of some goal, desired object, or other motivator that the protagonist pursues, often with little or no narrative explanation. The idea behind this is to create a back story for the staff of the company and involve the visitor in a sensory experience that could change over time through curatorial renewal.

A series of staff Lockers could create random vignettes; when open they reveal the contents of a day or a personal effects (for instance sweetheart's locket, shopping list, laundry and uniforms) that hint to one's life.

The "Manager's Office" could hold company memorabilia. The trophy from a league cricket championship, a photograph of the company band and other nostalgia reveal the social history of the company.

Taxidermy could be displayed in cloches/ bell jars. These mini tablescapes would be Victorian inspired and contain both modern and vintage tableaux. They evoke time capsules and illustrate the clash and harmonisation of Anglo Indian culture.





Ephemera

As a group this defines the relationship between management and employees, front of house and back of house.

In addition to Trading Maps that outline the company's planned growth, Telegrams, memos and other company communication can be included.

Additionally, a montage of photographs could be decoupage'd onto the walls leading to the bathrooms to create a wallpaper of sorts, as a cost effective solution in place of salon style frames.



Ships designed to be sent forth by y^e East India Company this present Year 1692.



<i>Ships Names -</i>	<i>Tons</i>	<i>Men</i>
<i>Resolution - - - - -</i>	<i>650</i>	<i>130</i>
<i>Dofones - - - - -</i>	<i>730</i>	<i>146</i>
<i>Princes of Denmark -</i>	<i>670</i>	<i>133</i>
<i>Royall James & Mary -</i>	<i>670</i>	<i>134</i>
<i>American Merchant -</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>60</i>
<i>New Ship at Dofeford to be commandd by Cap: Kylor. l.</i>	<i>350</i>	<i>70</i>
<i>New Ship at Rotterdam - to be commandd by Cap: Hosler. l.</i>	<i>340</i>	<i>70</i>
<i>Harke - - - - -</i>	<i>400</i>	<i>80</i>
	<i>4110</i>	<i>823</i>

*And also four ships more of those that are
daily exported from Frora. l.*



Salvage & Upcycle

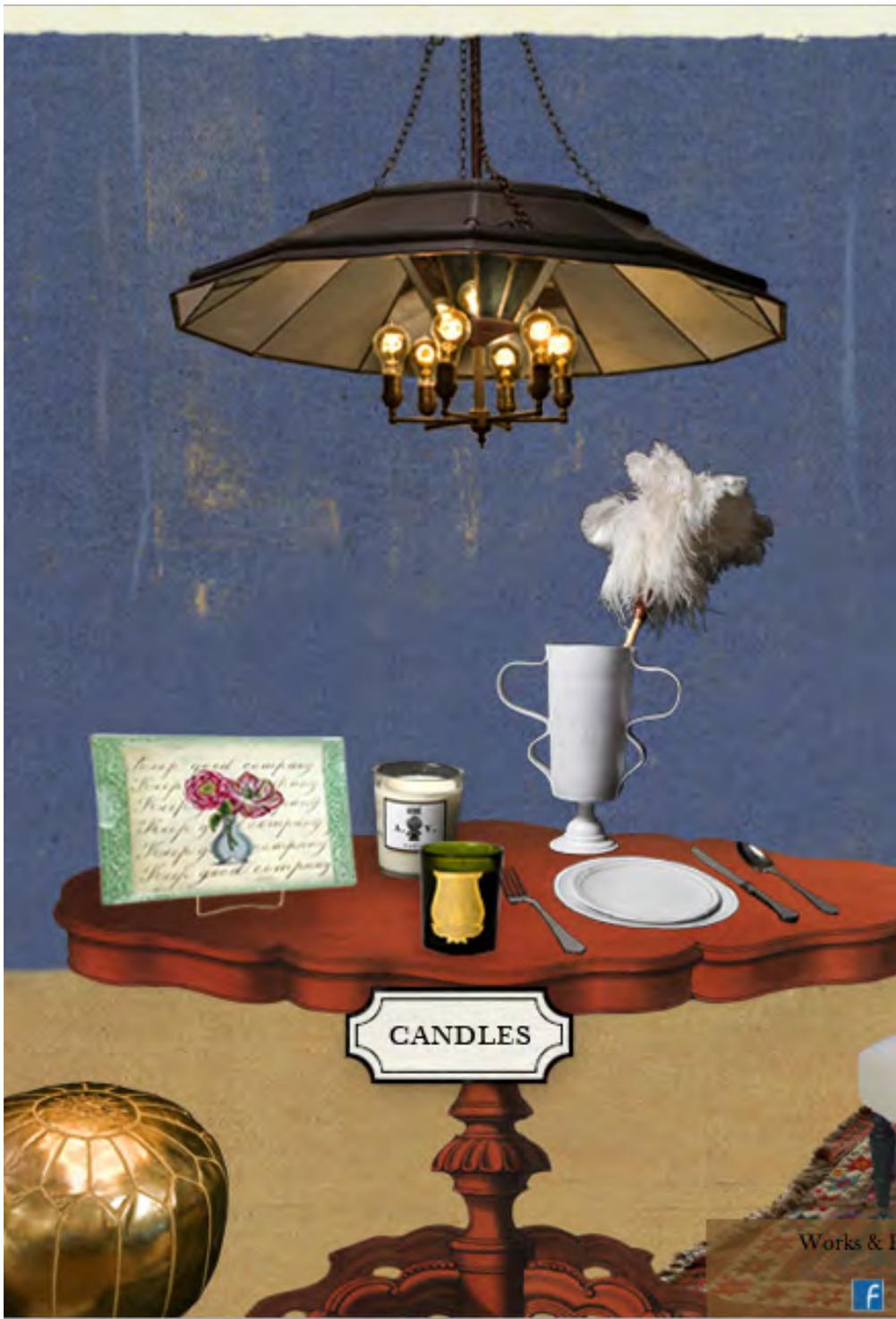
Vintage travelling trunks with legs can serve as tables in the back area; "Mess Hall."

Old church pews offer an affordable alternative to built-in seating. Natural or indigo calico is sympathetic to the time.

Vintage Indian or Victorian shutters can serve as a partition/window screen in the bar area to create the feeling of a 'snug.'

Victorian doors could serve as bar surface; as could reclaimed flooring tiles.





Website Navigation

The website could further add to the sense of place by reproducing the layout and allowing visitors to click an area for more information. A map key could depict coffee, cocktails etc. for more information on offerings.

Vintage mapping can be used; see peguclub.com. For story telling see Story telling: <http://narrative.ly/about/>

Current company in London using East India Company graphics for comparison shown below.



Death & Co



- HOME
- DOOR POLICY
- MENU
- SPIRITS
- EVENTS
- COCKTAILS AT HOME
- FOUNDERS
- CONTACT

HOME

In 1919 the Volstead Act brought a swift end to nightlife, and the refined craft of the American bartender was outlawed. It was thought that to drink alcohol was to live a life shadowed by death. It was thought by some that these were death and company. It's taken us nearly a century to restore flavor to the drink and class to specialty cocktails. In our time, a night to celebrate life's simple pleasures with fine wine, exquisitely crafted cocktails, beautifully prepared food, and impeccable sipping spirits is a rare gift. To those who shun the night, we tip our hat. To those who shine after dusk, we offer a warm embrace. Welcome to the new golden age. Welcome to Death & Co.

Atmosphere

Scent can play a key role in transporting patrons to an exotic place, it is the sense most linked to human memory. House trading scents of tobacco and tea add subliminal experience. In addition to candles, diffusers and sprays the brewing of tea on site and selling of cigar will help carry the scent through the space.

In VIP or private areas the client can have control of their lighting via Hue Light bulbs. This would be a unique feature and allow those renting the space to help customize their experience.

The hallway leading to the bathroom or any other isolated area could incorporate an unexpected sound track - perhaps the company choir's rousing song or maybe an overheard indiscretion.

By day lighting mimics refracted sunlight in tonal quality, via warm sunlight bulbs in spots or pendants. At night the tropical atmosphere closes in and low voltage lighting sets the scene for convivial times.

Enhale

(Scratch-n-sniff Page here)

