

# Berlin Furniture Drawings by Carl Wilhelm Marckwort (1798-1875)

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The Rijksmuseum recently acquired eight drawings by the cabinet-maker (*Tischlermeister*) from Braunschweig, Carl Wilhelm Marckwort (1798-1875), with funds from the bequest of Ms J.D. Driessen (figs. 1, 4-7, 9-11).<sup>1</sup> The artist executed them in the years 1820-23, when he was working as a journeyman in Berlin. He made many others during this period: more than twenty survive in other collections. Marckwort must have taken them back with him upon his return to Braunschweig, where the group bought by the Rijksmuseum was until recently preserved in the possession of a succession of *Tischlermeister*. These drawings are exceedingly rare: no comparable designs by any other furniture maker working in Berlin in the first half of the nineteenth century are known. Material of this kind was often discarded, unless kept by an official institution, and in Berlin, the devastation of the Second World War has meant the loss of any similar furniture drawings that may have existed in either institutional or private hands. Marckwort's surviving drawings are therefore an important source for our knowledge of several aspects of early nineteenth-century furniture making in Berlin, which at the time, with Vienna, was the foremost centre of production and design in the German-speaking lands.

< Fig. 1  
CARL WILHELM  
MARCKWORT, *The  
Secrétaire Made by  
Bernhard Wanschaff  
in Berlin in 1811 in  
Memory of Queen  
Louise, Berlin, 1820 (?)*.  
Graphite, pen and  
black ink, water-  
colour, 399 x 265 mm.  
Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum,  
inv. no. RP-T-2019-175;  
purchased with funds  
from the bequest of  
Ms J.D. Driessen.

## Recording Berlin Furniture: Secrétaires

One drawing shows a piece of furniture that was several years old at the time of Marckwort's stay in Berlin (fig. 1).<sup>2</sup> This celebrated secrétaire was made in 1811 by the well-known Berlin cabinetmaker Bernhard Wanschaff, as a monument to Queen Louise of Prussia, who had died the year before. It has been lost since the Second World War, but is recorded in photographs (fig. 2). Created two years

Fig. 2  
BERNHARD  
WANSCHAFF,  
*Secrétaire, Berlin, 1811*.  
Formerly Berlin,  
Hohenzollern-  
museum, Schloss  
Monbijou.



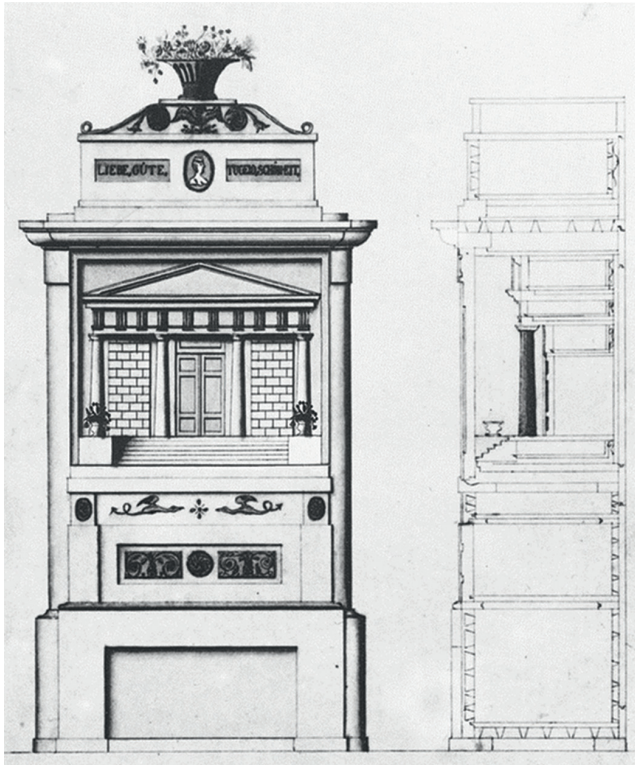


Fig. 3  
Two drawings  
(fig. 2 and a lost one)  
combined photo-  
graphically to  
show the interior  
of the Queen  
Louise secretaire.

before the defeat of Napoleon, the secretaire had a nationalist dimension. It was veneered in indigenous burr birchwood, and the mounts were made locally of iron, patinated to resemble greenish bronze; this was regarded as a patriotic enterprise. The secretaire was the first piece of furniture to be publicly exhibited in Berlin after the end of the French occupation of the city and the return of the royal family: it was shown at the Academy exhibition of 1812, where it was bought by King Frederick William III, Queen Louise's widower.

The delicately proportioned secretaire has a projecting façade. Its rounded front corners merge without interruption into the sides, a sophisticated feature that was novel in 1811 and only became widespread in the 1820s. The wooden basket on top is intended to contain an arrangement of artificial flowers. All the mounts refer to the deceased queen. Her portrait is flanked by two plaques proclaiming her love,

her piety, her goodness and her beauty (*Liebe und Frömmigkeit* and *Guede und Schönheit*). The central mount above this shows a pelican in her piety, and others depict vestal virgins and a snake biting its own tail, a symbol of infinity; all celebrate the virtuous character of the Prussian queen.

As there is no photograph of the open secretaire, Marckwort's drawing is of particular interest for the information it provides regarding the interior, by means of a plan and a cross-section seen from the side. The catalogue of the 1812 exhibition records that behind the drop-front the interior of the mausoleum of the deceased queen was represented.<sup>3</sup> Another drawing by Marckwort, whose whereabouts are at present unknown, is of the frontal view of this interior. It shows a façade with four Doric columns above a flight of steps flanked by vases. By projecting this drawing, which was published in 1799,<sup>4</sup> into the drawing at the Rijksmuseum, an image of the open secretaire can be constructed (fig. 3). When in October 1812 Bernhard Wanschaff was striving to be admitted as a member of the Berlin Art Academy, he submitted this secretaire.<sup>5</sup> However, his request was refused, and in its response the Academy criticized this way of designing the inside of a piece of furniture in imitation of architecture: '[It] cannot condone a taste that allows columns, façades and even half a temple to be part of cupboards, as these are moveable pieces of furniture, and as these elements are not suited, and even obstructive, to their use'.<sup>6</sup>

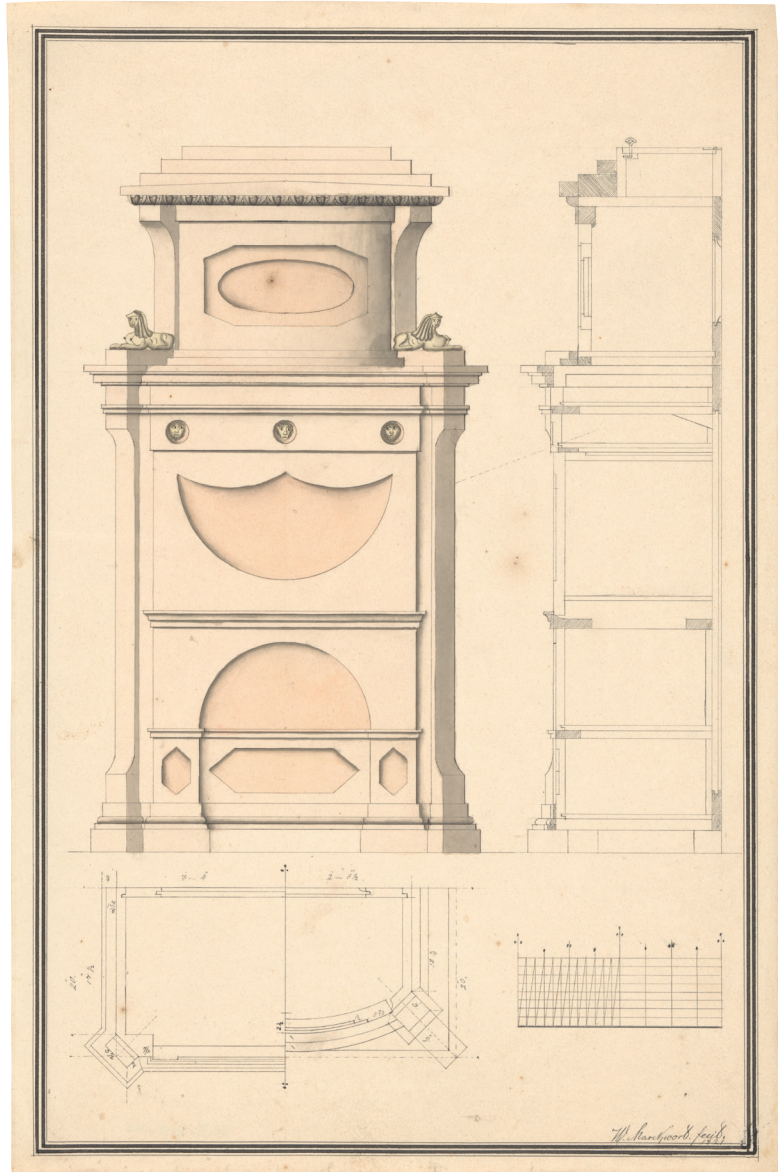
From December 1812 the secretaire stood in the king's apartment in the palace at Potsdam. Marckwort is therefore unlikely to have had access to the actual piece of furniture when he made his drawing. This suggests that he was employed as a journeyman in Wanschaff's workshop, and there copied designs for the famous secretaire as an exercise in drawing. This would explain why, although the secretaire

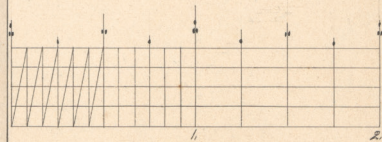
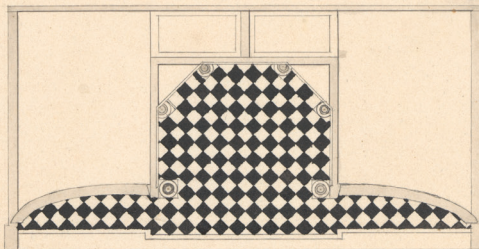
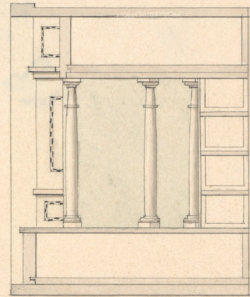
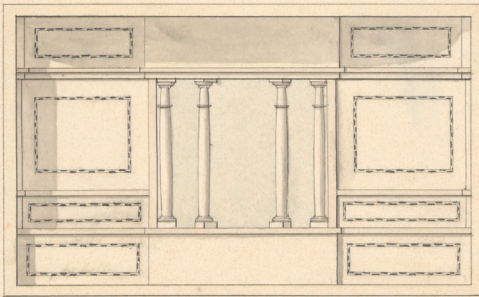
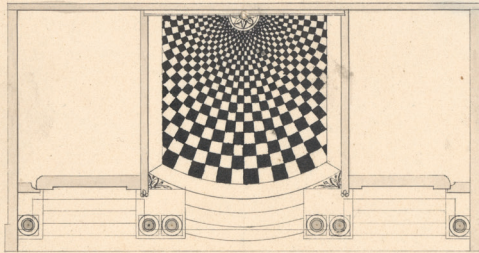
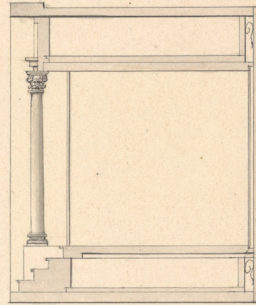
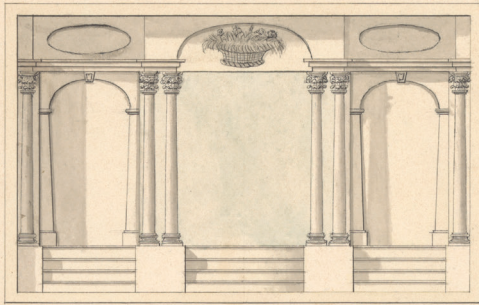
itself is represented very precisely,<sup>7</sup> there are considerable deviations in the mounts. Evidently there was less detailed information available on those, and the mounts with feathered wings, only used on a few pieces of furniture made for Queen Louise, had already passed into oblivion. These were now amalgamated with the small snakes below the drop-front and turned into winged dragons with long tails.

During the first half of the nineteenth century the secretaire was the fashionable type of desk *par excellence* in Germany, and the principal item to emanate from cabinet-makers' workshops. A second drawing shows a more up-to-date example (fig. 4).<sup>8</sup> As was typical, it consists of a cupboard with drawers resting on a tall base, a central section with a drop-front opening up to reveal a fitted interior, and a narrower

Fig. 4

CARL WILHELM MARCKWORT, *A Secrétaire with a Pair of Sphinxes*, Berlin, 1821. Graphite, pen and black ink, water-colour, 413 x 271 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-T-2019-177; purchased with funds from the bequest of Ms J.D. Driessen.





*M. Storchardt Archt. Berlin 21.*

## &lt; Fig. 5

CARL WILHELM MARCKWORT, *The Interior of the Central Section of Two Secretaires, Both with a Plan and a Section from the Side*, Berlin, 1820. Graphite, pen and black ink, water-colour, 405 x 268 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-T-2019-176; purchased with funds from the bequest of Ms J.D. Driessen.

upper part. The front is structured in an architectural manner and has massive canted corners. The drawing illustrates the tendency, prevalent from the 1820s onwards, to incorporate curved panels of various geometric forms. The gently convex upper part is flanked by sphinxes, probably made of a composition known as *Holzbronze* and oil-gilded. Carl August Mencke's Berlin manufactory had a selection of such items on offer, at reasonably low cost.<sup>9</sup> In secretaires of this kind, the veneer invariably runs from top to bottom, and mouldings and recessions are not allowed to interrupt its figure. The natural beauty of the so-called pyramid mahogany, a veneer ubiquitous throughout this period, was accorded pride of place.

In Berlin, as in many other cities, cabinet-makers had to submit a secretaire as the masterpiece which they needed to make in order to gain admittance to the guild. This was another reason why it was a favourite subject for drawings made as part of their training. In a case like this, where the secretaire is of the latest fashion, it is unclear whether Marckwort was copying a drawing, recording an existing piece, or perhaps himself trying his hand as a designer by introducing features of his own invention.

Another drawing shows two secretaire interiors (fig. 5).<sup>10</sup> These interior fittings with their open and closed compartments were separately constructed within their own boxlike case, which fitted into the space behind the secretaire's drop-front. They were known as *Eingerichte*. Both examples have the typical arrangement of a wide central section flanked by narrower bays, articulated by a base and a frieze.

The upper design is strongly architectural, with its steps, its arcade with paired columns, and its mirrored central recess with a floor laid in a sophisticated pattern. The lateral sections open as doors and the base and the frieze contain drawers operating on springs. Marckwort based this *Eingerichte* on

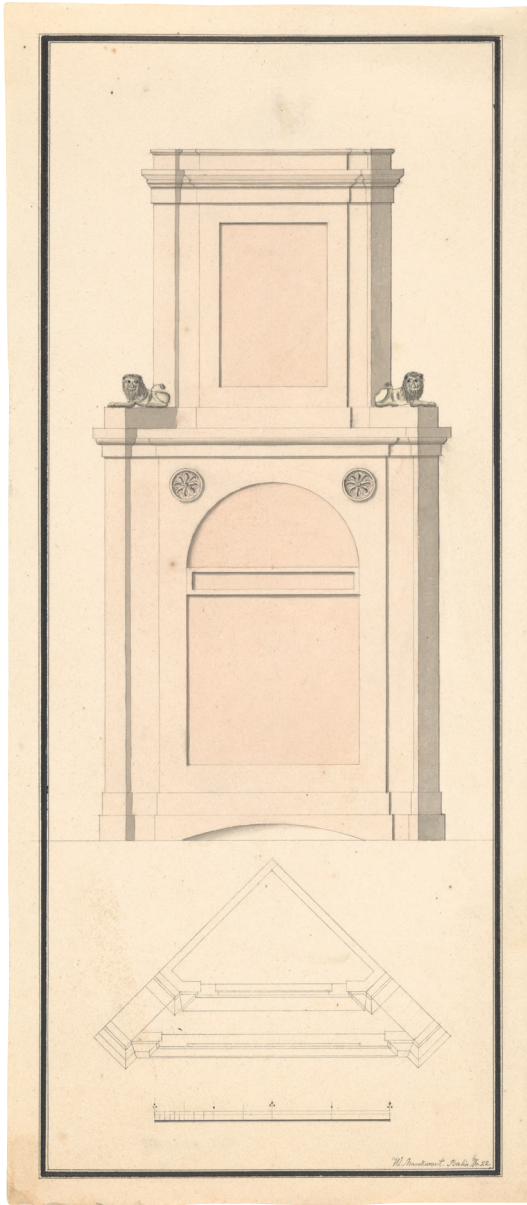
a piece that he probably saw being made, a secretaire now in a private collection. It is signed by Joseph Oberfranke and dated 1821, whereas Marckwort has dated his drawing 1820. Oberfranke, who only became a member of the guild in 1824, was probably working alongside Marckwort as a journeyman in Wanschaff's workshop. In April 1822, Marckwort also made a drawing of the completed secretaire.<sup>11</sup>

The lower alternative is simpler: the columns, probably intended to be made of alabaster, have no gilt bronze capitals, the floor has a plain pattern, and the fronts of the drawers (still without their knobs) are inlaid with narrow bands with a block-like pattern, of a kind that in Berlin was produced by specialist manufacturers. Behind the mirrored recess there are eight small secret drawers that can be accessed from the side.

### Other Types of Furniture

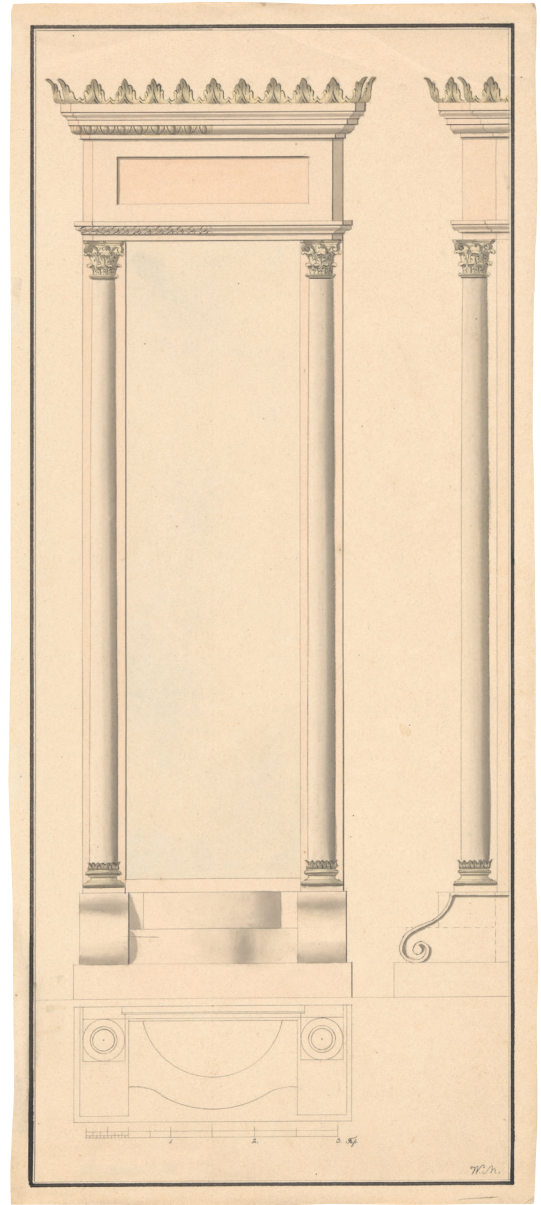
Apart from secretaires, Marckwort drew a range of other pieces. One of the drawings in the Rijksmuseum shows a fairly plain corner cupboard with a tall superstructure, with simple recessed panels of geometric outline (fig. 6).<sup>12</sup> There are two carved rosettes and a pair of lions, presumably gilded ones from August Mencke's manufactory. In the drawing, the plan does not show how the doors are constructed, and elements like keyholes are absent. Three more designs by Marckwort for similar corner cupboards, showing a number of variations, are in a private collection. One is dated 16 June 1822 like the one in fig. 6, whereas the two others were drawn a few weeks earlier, on 19 May; both days were Sundays.

Typical for Berlin is the so-called *trumeau*, or pier looking-glass as tall as a room (fig. 7).<sup>13</sup> In Marckwort's drawing, the stepped base, the tall columns with Corinthian capitals, and the panelled top section with its carved acanthus leaves denote a high-quality example. The height works out at 343 cm, which



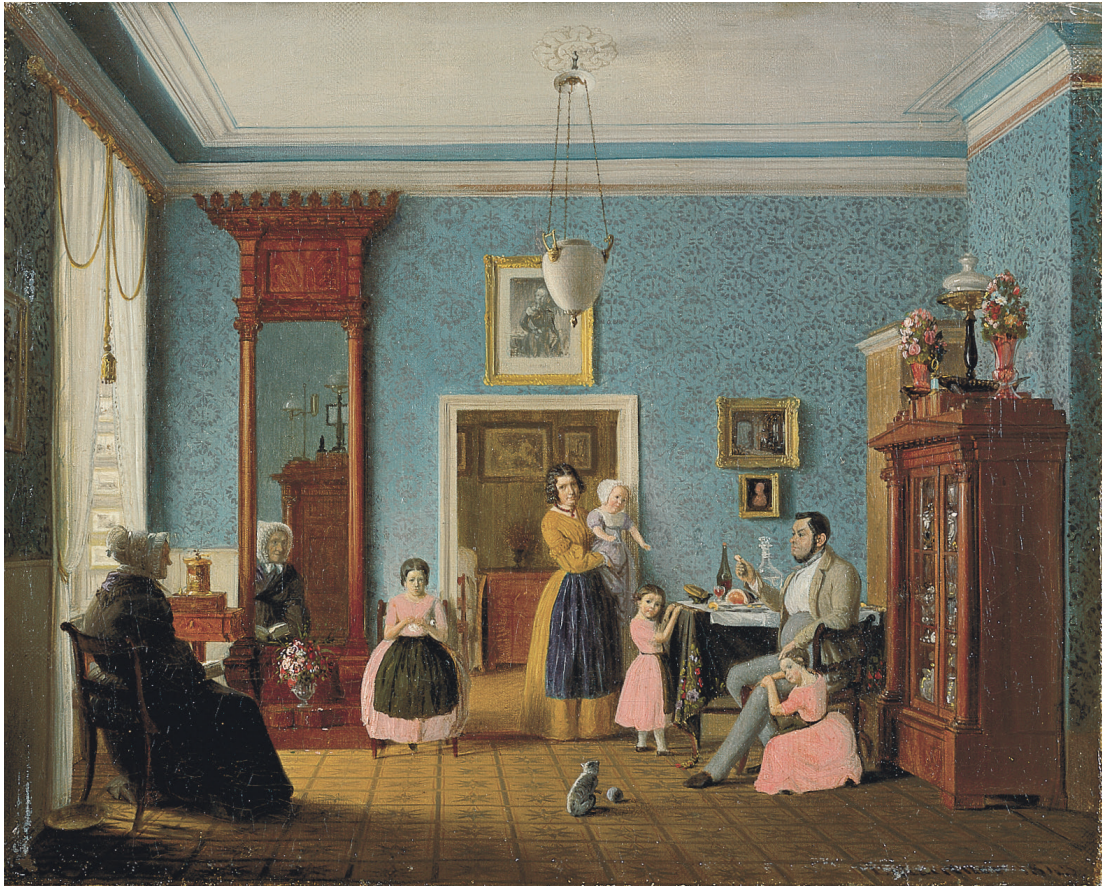
*Fig. 6*  
 CARL WILHELM  
 MARCKWORT,  
*A Corner Cupboard  
 with a Pair of Lions*,  
 Berlin, 1822.  
 Graphite, pen and  
 black ink, water-  
 colour, 402 x 177 mm.

Amsterdam,  
 Rijksmuseum,  
 inv. no. RP-T-2019-178;  
 purchased with funds  
 from the bequest of  
 Ms J.D. Driessen.



*Fig. 7*  
 CARL WILHELM  
 MARCKWORT,  
*A Looking-Glass*,  
 Berlin, c. 1820-23.  
 Graphite, pen  
 and black ink,  
 watercolour,  
 409 x 180 mm.

Amsterdam,  
 Rijksmuseum,  
 inv. no. RP-T-2019-182;  
 purchased with funds  
 from the bequest of  
 Ms J.D. Driessen.



corresponds with the *bel étage* of a Berlin house. *Trumeaus* were almost invariably of mahogany, but in the 1820s the capitals and foliage were often made of cast zinc, which would be painted to resemble wood or, as indicated here, oil-gilded. Because of the size of the mirror plate, often made up of two pieces, the *trumeau* was amongst the most expensive furnishings of a Berlin house. In Eduard Gärtner's view of the reception room of the Berlin metalworker Hauschild it takes pride of place (fig. 8). In a private collection there are two slightly simpler variations of this design, similarly arranged and, like the drawing in fig. 7, just bearing the monogram *W.M.*

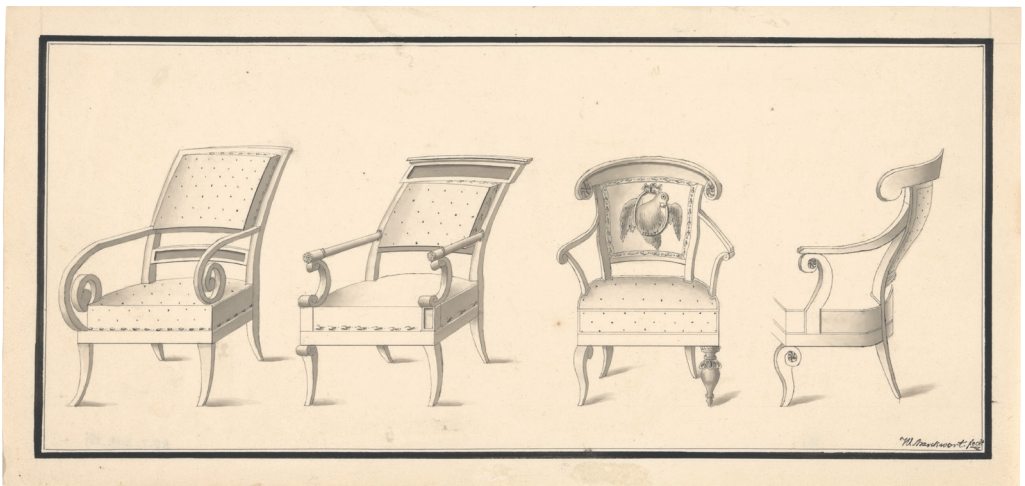
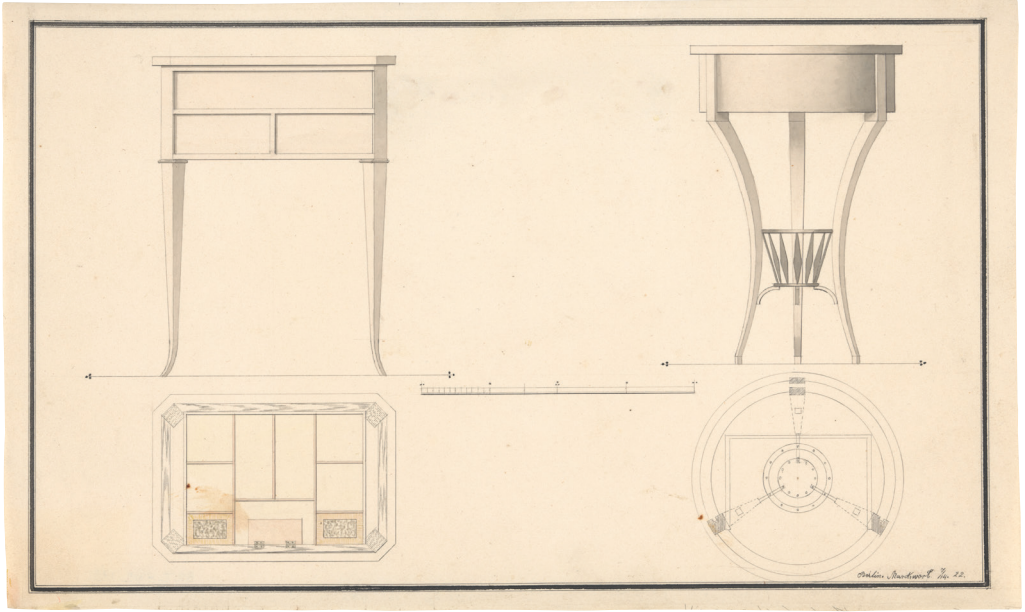
With their slim, delicately curved legs and discreet black elements, two

work-tables seem less characteristic of Berlin taste; rather, they are reminiscent of fashionable Viennese furniture of the years between 1805 and 1815 (fig. 9).<sup>14</sup> The rectangular table with curved legs to the left is accompanied by a plan showing the interior of the top drawer, with at its front a pin-cushion that may be folded outward. The spaces flanking this pin-cushion have lids with a border framing a rectangle of patterned wood; they do not have knobs. The plan below the circular table to the right shows a large drawer and elucidates the construction of the openwork basket situated between the legs.

The final two drawings in the Rijksmuseum are the only known ones of chairs by Marckwort. The first depicts four armchairs, set in a row and all

Fig. 8  
EDUARD GÄRTNER,  
*The Hauschild Family  
in their Drawing  
Room, Berlin, 1843.*  
Oil on canvas,  
25.8 x 32 cm.  
Berlin, Stadtmuseum,  
inv. no. VII 59/726x.  
Photograph:  
Christel Lehmann.





## &lt; Fig. 9

CARL WILHELM MARCKWORT, *Two Small Tables*, Berlin, 1822. Graphite, pen and black ink, water-colour, 215 x 357 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-T-2019-179; purchased with funds from the bequest of Ms J.D. Driessen.

shown from the same angle, and varied both in design and upholstery (fig. 10).<sup>15</sup> Elements such as the separately applied top rails, the openwork patterns of the backs, and the shapes of the arms and legs are familiar from Berlin seat furniture of the 1820s and 1830s. The firmly angular upholstery is distinguished by a variety of finishes, including rows of nails and patterns of pearls or a Vitruvian scroll. The drawing demonstrates detailed knowledge of chair-making and even upholstery: Berlin furniture firms like Wahnschaff's had begun to compete with traditional chairmakers, producing both simple and luxurious seat furniture.

The second drawing has a less unified appearance, as each of the three designs is presented with an alternative solution. In addition, the two chairs to the left are shown at an angle, whereas the one to the right is represented in a frontal and a side view (fig. 11).<sup>16</sup> Although the draughtsman was neither a chairmaker nor an upholsterer, he knew exactly what he was doing here: the double view of the chair to the right makes perfect sense, as the rounded back to the seat and the curve to the back cannot be gauged from the front. Once again, all features can be paralleled in Berlin chairs of the period.

### Carl Wilhelm Marckwort

At the time when Carl Wilhelm Marckwort was working in Berlin, all his fellow journeyman cabinet makers doubtless also practised drawing, and his output may not have had any exceptional merit. But as his drawings are a unique survival, he himself becomes a figure of interest about whom we wish to find out as much as possible. He was born on 6 March 1798 in Braunschweig, as the son of the *Tischlermeister* Johann Elias Friedrich Marckwort and Sophia Elisabeth Heuern, who had married the year before.<sup>17</sup> Together with a twin sister he was baptized on 18 March, the well-established *Tischlermeister*

Heinrich Christian Wilhelm Fanger (1736-1800) standing as his godfather.<sup>18</sup> Marckwort descended from a respectable line of furniture makers: his grandfather had become *Tischlermeister* in Braunschweig in 1753,<sup>19</sup> and his father in 1785. Their *Meisterrisse*, or drawings of the masterpiece they proposed to make to obtain membership of the guild, are held in the Städtisches Museum in Braunschweig, as well as that, dated 1720, by Philipp Julius Markworth who belonged to yet an earlier generation. All three are of a two-door cupboard, the obligatory masterpiece in Braunschweig until 1789.<sup>20</sup> When his father died in 1813,<sup>21</sup> Carl Wilhelm was probably working as his apprentice: boys usually entered a workshop after finishing school and receiving confirmation, normally between the ages of twelve and fourteen, and Carl Wilhelm almost certainly profited from the rule that allowed sons of masters, when training in their father's workshop, to reduce their apprenticeship from four to three years. 1813 was eventful for the fifteen-year-old for other reasons: it saw the termination of seven years of French occupation of the city of Braunschweig, and Johann Christian Ernst Fanger, the son of Carl Wilhelm's godfather who was successfully continuing his father's furniture workshop, died unexpectedly.<sup>22</sup> Carl Wilhelm's mother, left with a family of four, doubtless faced grave difficulties. It seems likely that the family finances were insufficient to pay for the boy's further training, with the consequence that the four years that were now required, as he was no longer working in his father's workshop, were actually extended to five, so that Carl Wilhelm would not become a journeyman before 1816 or 1817.

Although the French had abolished guild rules – a move that up to 1821 would be gradually reversed in Braunschweig – Marckwort will have felt the urge to spend the next three years working elsewhere, as had been the rule. Nearby Berlin, for which only a single border

## &lt; Fig. 10

CARL WILHELM MARCKWORT, *Four Upholstered Armchairs*, Berlin, 1823. Graphite, pen and black ink, water-colour, 135 x 409 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-T-2019-180; purchased with funds from the bequest of Ms J.D. Driessen.

## &lt; Fig. 11

CARL WILHELM MARCKWORT, *Three Upholstered Armchairs, That to the Right Seen from Two Angles*, Berlin, c. 1820-23. Graphite, pen and black ink, water-colour, 176 x 368 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-T-2019-181; purchased with funds from the bequest of Ms J.D. Driessen.

between *Länder* needed to be crossed, was an attractive destination. Apart from Vienna, the Prussian capital was the principal city for furniture making in the German-speaking lands, with over five times as many workshops as Braunschweig. Following the end of the Napoleonic war it was expanding at an enormous pace; moreover, it was a Protestant city.

In Berlin, as we have seen, the talented young craftsman probably found his way to Georg Bernhard Wanschaff (1773-1859), who also came from the Braunschweig region. Wanschaff had joined the Berlin guild in 1809 and, like his brother Carl, ran one of the city's best-known furniture workshops. He received commissions from the court and collaborated with Karl Friedrich Schinkel as well as other architects.<sup>23</sup> Journeymen were not obliged to obtain citizenship of the cities where they worked, hence Marckwort's name does not occur in the Berlin directories.<sup>24</sup> We only know of his Berlin years through his drawings, dated from the city between 1820 and 1823.

Marckwort was back in Braunschweig by the end of 1824, and the local directory for 1826 lists a 'W. Markwort', *Tischlermeister* in the Ritterstrasse, at no. 2471.<sup>25</sup> This is surprising, as Marckwort would not obtain the rank of *Meister* as recognized by the guild until 1834; it is nonetheless confirmed elsewhere in the same directory. The omission of a first name was doubtless deliberate. In August 1825 the governor of the guild, Daniel Petersen, together with his colleagues, paid a visit to Carl Wilhelm's mother who claimed to run a workshop; none was found. It was to no avail that the widow Marckwort now decided to pay eleven years' arrears of contributions to the guild; some tools were seized, and in 1826 she and her son were summonsed by the police and ordered to cease any work.<sup>26</sup> From then on, no *Tischlermeister* of the name of Marckwort was listed in the directories until 1834.

Marckwort had obviously tried to establish himself officially in Braunschweig on the basis of the old family business, without submitting a masterpiece. In Berlin this would have been possible, as the freedom to practise a craft was introduced there as part of the reform laws of 1807-11. Markwort's initiative was no isolated case: between 1814 and 1825 more than a hundred journeyman furniture makers tried to profit from the weakened position of the guilds under French rule by settling in Braunschweig on the basis of a mere licence.<sup>27</sup> Their efforts were frustrated by the guild whose powers were gradually being restored, and so Marckwort, too, only reappears in the records in 1833, on the occasion of his submission of a *Meisterriss* to the guild (fig. 12).<sup>28</sup>

This masterpiece design illustrates the influence exercised by models from Berlin in Braunschweig, and also elucidates the role Marckwort's drawings from his days as a journeyman continued to play for him. The *Meisterriss* is all but a copy of his own drawing of 1822, mentioned above, of a secretaire made in 1821 by Joseph Oberfranke;<sup>29</sup> the *Eingerichte* also follows that model, as is clear from a comparison with the drawing Marckwort made while the piece was still being constructed (fig. 5, top). A detailed comparison with Marckwort's drawing of 1822 demonstrates that on his *Meisterriss* he introduced a number of subtle changes. Some of these concern details of form and decoration, but he also proposed to provide his drawers with fixed bottoms (see the coloured markings in fig. 12). Normally, drawer bottoms were made separately and then slid in from behind, so this implied an added constructional difficulty of the kind the guild like to impose. Marckwort obviously strove for a high standard of execution: only a very few other Braunschweig *Meisterrisse* of this period incorporate this detail.<sup>30</sup>

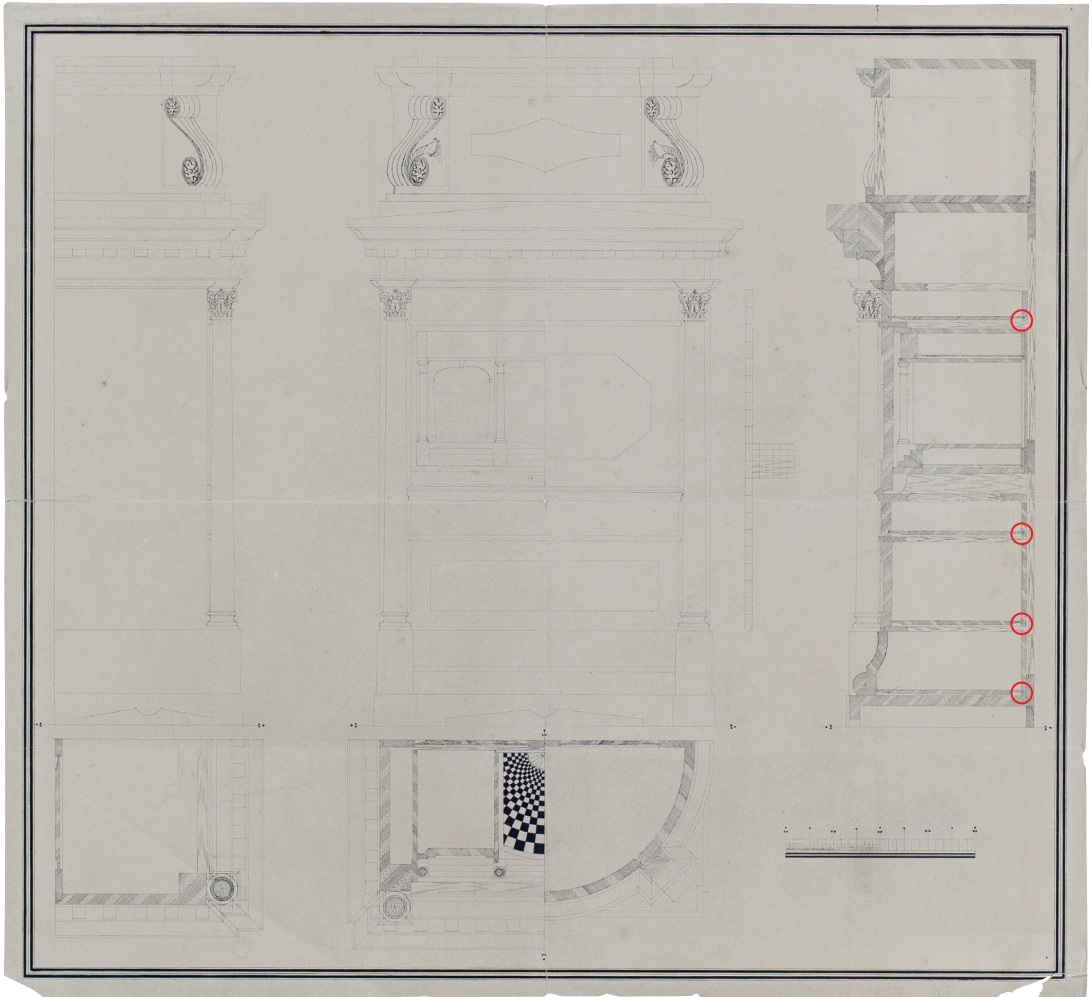


Fig. 12

CARL WILHELM  
MARCKWORT,  
*Design (Meisterriss)*  
*for a Secrétaire,*  
Braunschweig, 1833.  
Pen and black ink,  
409 x 445 mm  
(coloured markings  
added by the author).  
Braunschweig,  
Städtisches Museum  
Braunschweig,  
Graphische  
Sammlung, inv. no.  
1640-0020-00.  
Photograph:  
Dirk Scherer.

After his mother died in 1833, Carl Wilhelm went to live in her house.<sup>31</sup> Upon submitting his masterpiece he was admitted to the guild on 31 July 1834, and from 1835 is listed as *Tischlermeister* in the directories. In 1838 he married Friedericke Caroline Schöndube<sup>32</sup> and moved with her to another house, Steinweg no. 1928. Until 1873 he is listed there as *Tischlermeister*; from 1850 the spelling 'Markworth' is employed, and in 1858 the number of the house undergoes a change. In 1874 he was living with his son Theodor, a xylographer, and on 4 February 1875 he died.<sup>33</sup> He left two sons and a

daughter, none of whom continued the furniture workshop.<sup>34</sup> His long career notwithstanding, no surviving piece of furniture can be attributed to him.

### Drawing Technique

Marckwort's designs are fine examples of technical drawing, carefully executed by a craftsman. They are based on preliminary outlines in graphite, of which hardly anything is visible, as they were largely erased. The paper shows occasional holes made by a pair of compasses, used to transpose measurements and to draw curved lines. The fine straight lines, of about 0.2 millimetre in width, were probably

drawn with a ruling pen using carbon-based ink.<sup>35</sup> The variation in blacks and greys and the matt finish indicate that no fluid ink, mixed with shellac, was employed, but rather a dry block of pressed carbon-based ink that needed to be moistened with water before use. The fineness of the hatching suggests that this was drawn with a steel pen. Details such as the symmetrically disposed mouldings of the bases to the columns demonstrate that Marckwort's free hand was fairly confident. The grey shadows and the colours red, blue, yellow and green indicating polished wood, gilding, mirrors and textiles were added with a brush.

In order to achieve the desired precision, smooth wove paper was used, rather than the more common laid paper. In Berlin as elsewhere, the finest paper of this kind was imported from England. The watermarks show that the paper was manufactured in James Whatman's long-established and famous paper mill in Maidstone in Kent.<sup>36</sup> After the death of James's son, also James, in 1798, this was continued by various owners. Marckwort appears to have cut his paper from middle-sized sheets, measuring 44 x 57 cm, on which the watermark occurs at the bottom right-hand corner. Marckwort treated the drawings, which he almost certainly

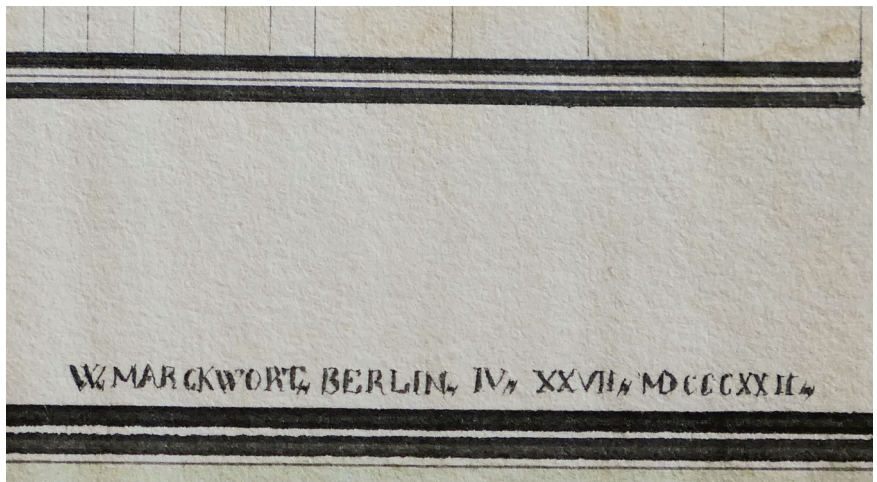
kept as a group himself, with particular attention. He framed them with multiple lines, and even in the case of small coherent series, such as the corner cupboards or *trumeaux*, he drew each one separately, like a small work of art. Many are signed and dated, sometimes to the very day, and annotated with the name Berlin; in some cases, the artist has even employed the official-looking Antiqua lettering (fig. 13).<sup>37</sup> The drawing of the secretaire for Queen Louise, at least, appears to have been dated at a later time, Marckwort putting 1820 rather than 1821, the year given in the watermark (unless it was for some reason antedated).

### Furniture Makers as Draughtsmen

In Germany the tradition of *Meister-riche* was a long one: in many cities, journeyman furniture makers who wished to become a member of the guild had been obliged to submit a drawing of the masterpiece they proposed to make from at least the seventeenth century onwards (cf. *Acquisitions: Drawings for European Domestic Furniture* in this issue, pp. 166-99). Thus some instruction in drawing must have been a traditional element of the training of apprentices and journeymen.

Fig. 13

CARL WILHELM  
MARCKWORT,  
*A Secretaire*,  
Berlin, 1822 (detail  
of the signature).  
Braunschweig,  
private collection.  
Photograph: author.



Nevertheless, Marckwort's ability as a draughtsman is remarkable. It reflects the increased attention given to craftsmen's training in his time.

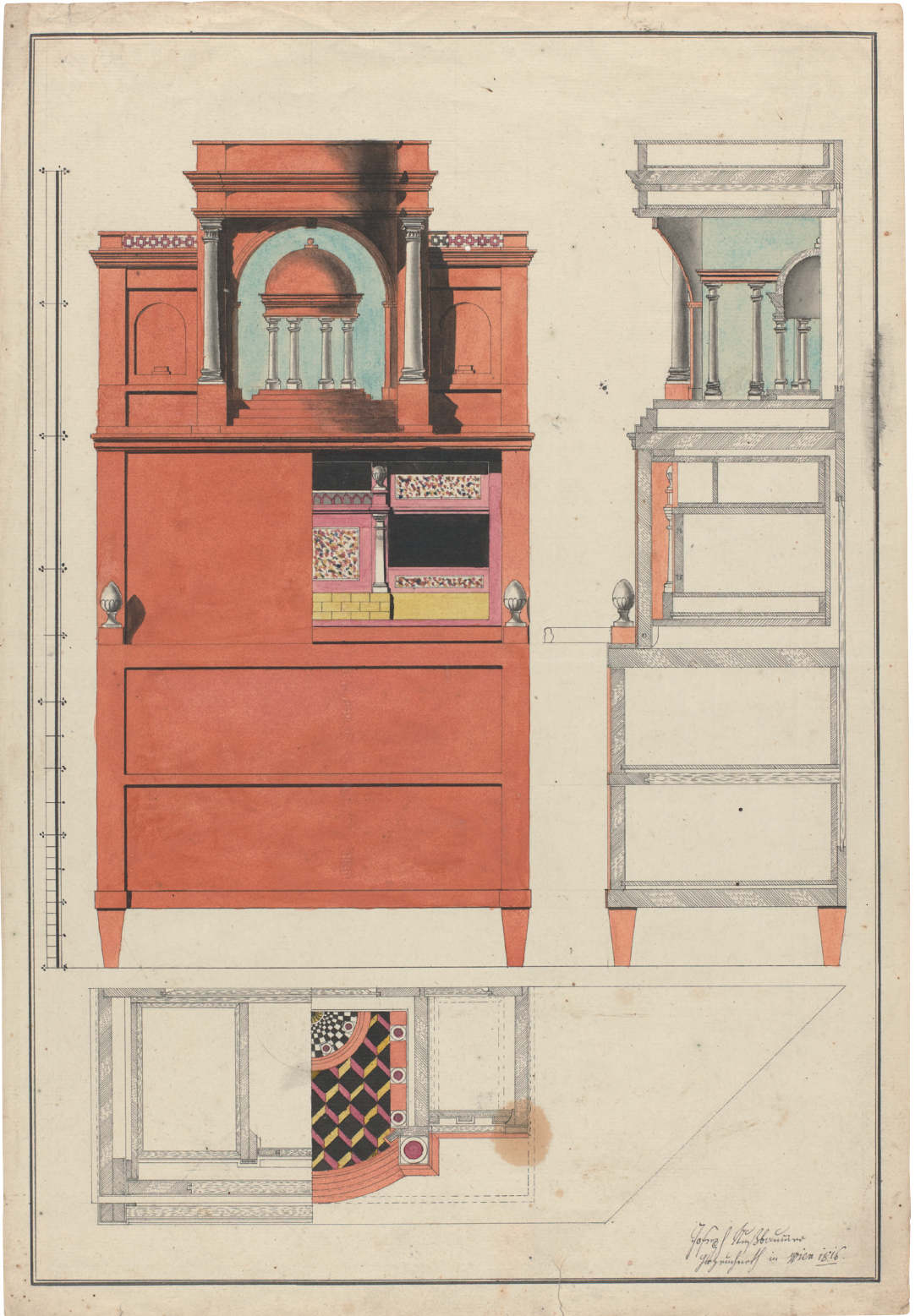
It may be assumed that he went to school in Braunschweig. Many children of local craftsmen went to the city's orphanage school, which from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards welcomed all children, both boys and girls, and was considered the best school in the region.<sup>38</sup> From 1760 onwards, drawing lessons were an important part of the curriculum: spread over two days, they occupied a total of five hours a week. During the years that Marckwort would have been at school, they were given by Andreas Julius Griem (born in 1778), who was considered one of the town's finest drawing masters. Moreover, the drawing school that had been founded in 1789 by the talented journeyman furniture maker and mechanic Karl Kahnt (died 1821) had been amalgamated into the orphanage school in 1800. It served as the top form of the drawing class and also provided instruction in architectural drawing and theory, as well as modelling, to apprentices and journeymen craftsmen.<sup>39</sup> Unfortunately, Marckwort's name has not yet been found among the documents listing those attending the school, unlike David and Flora Härder, the two eldest children of Christian Härder who from 1800 was in charge of the 'Herzöglich Braunschweigisch privilegierte Kunst-Meublenfabrik von Neuwied', a continuation of David Roentgen's famous furniture manufactory.<sup>40</sup>

In Berlin Marckwort was confronted with a fast-changing situation. By the end of the eighteenth century, initiatives had been deployed to foster the development of luxury industries and to improve taste; in the years 1807-11 these had been intensified by reforms that introduced the freedom to practise a craft, independent of guild regulations. The government was actively raising the level of education,<sup>41</sup>

and founded institutions to stimulate production. At the same time, it fostered private initiatives like independent and technical schools, Sunday schools, and the drawing schools that were attached to enterprises like the Royal Porcelain Manufactory, the iron foundry, the Stobwasser manufactory of lacquered goods, or Feilner's earthenware factory.<sup>42</sup>

The foremost institution was the Prussian Academy of Arts and Sciences which from 1786 had been considerably reformed. Apart from its traditional function as an academy for painters and sculptors, it now also served to foster applied arts and industries. From 1788 onwards the work of manufactories and craftsmen was admitted to its annual exhibitions.<sup>43</sup> In 1787 special classes were introduced for apprentices and journeymen; later on, they became known as the *Kunst- und Gewerkschule*. Like the Academy for Architecture (*Bauakademie*) founded in 1799, this school, which was free, offered practical teaching and the study of tasteful forms and models. By 1820 the curriculum of the Berlin *Kunst- und Gewerkschule* comprised free drawing, technical drawing with the aid of compasses and a ruler, modelling in clay and wax, and architecture.<sup>44</sup> As the craftsmen worked six days a week, from Monday to Saturday, lessons were given on Sunday, from 10 am to noon. The Prussian involvement in stimulating industry, led by Karl Friedrich Schinkel and Christian Peter Wilhelm Beuth, led to the establishment of other institutions to teach drawing. In 1819 the *Technische Deputation für Gewerbe* was restructured, and in 1821 the *Verein zur Beförderung des Gewerbefleißes in Preussen* and the *Gewerbeinstitut* were founded.<sup>45</sup>

For Berlin cabinet-makers, drawing had assumed a new importance when in 1794 it was ruled that those who aspired to join the guild were no longer obliged to produce as their masterpiece a version of the compulsory model, but were free to present their own design.<sup>46</sup> This not only led to an



&lt; Fig. 14

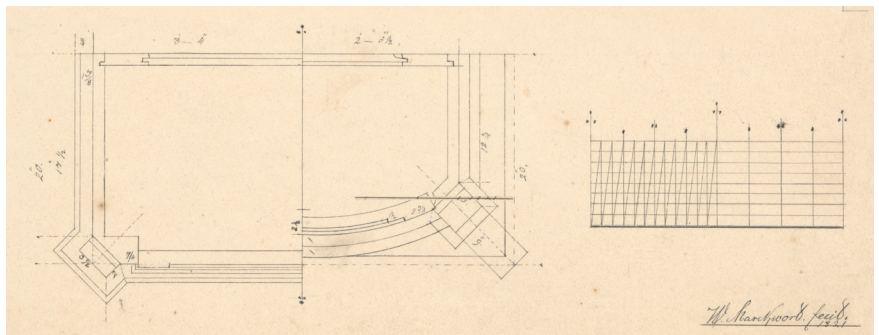
JOSEPH NUSSBAUMER,  
*A Secrétaire*,  
 Vienna, 1816.  
 Pen and black ink,  
 watercolour,  
 453 x 312 mm.  
 Amsterdam,  
 Rijksmuseum,  
 inv. no. RP-T-2013-52;  
 purchased with  
 funds from the  
 Decorative Art  
 Fund/Rijksmuseum  
 Fonds.

immediate rise in quality, but also to an increased interest in drawing lessons. The lists of pupils of the *Kunst- und Gewerkschule*, which are only partly preserved, include dozens of furniture makers, both apprentices and journeymen, aged between 13 and 20. Although Marckwort also seems to have made most his drawings on Sundays, his name has not been identified among them.<sup>47</sup>

No documents concerning Marckwort's training as a draughtsman have been found, but it is clear that both Braunschweig and Berlin offered exceptional opportunities in this respect. Whereas the style of the furniture he depicted is clearly indebted to Berlin models of the years 1810-25, his actual manner of drawing was close to that practised in Vienna. In that city, an initiative was introduced in 1785 to bring about a fundamental improvement in the quality of draughtsmanship required of aspiring cabinet-makers. By 1805 a style of drawing had been developed which remained current until about 1820, and to which Marckwort's manner is closely related.<sup>48</sup> The Rijksmuseum holds four fine drawings of this kind, executed in Vienna in 1816 and 1820 by Joseph Nussbaumer.<sup>49</sup> A design for a secretaire, dated 1816, exemplifies the similarities (fig. 14). The desk is shown frontally, next to a side cross-section and above a plan; the drawing's size is close to those by Marckwort, it has double framing lines, and at lower right is signed, dated and annotated with the place of manufacture.

Coloured washes are employed to characterize the materials used and shadows are carefully indicated. One small detail seems particularly meaningful: Marckwort marks the end of his lines that denote a ground, an axis or a scale by small points, usually three, arranged like a clover leaf (fig. 15). He uses this device, a precursor of the pointed arrow customarily found in later technical drawings, in nearly all his designs. In the places where he worked, this was an individual idiosyncrasy: his *Meisterriss* is the only one among the 117 surviving drawings made in Braunschweig in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that shows this feature, which is equally absent from Berlin drawings of the period, by architects like Friedrich Gilly and Karl Friedrich Schinkel, by manufacturers like Tobias Feilner, or from enterprises such as the Royal Porcelain Manufactory. In Viennese furniture designs, however, it is a common feature from about 1805 to 1820 – and can indeed be observed in those by Nussbaumer. In fact, among all German furniture drawings known to us this decorative device is found in only two others, the designs that were deposited at the Leipzig guild in 1801 to serve as the official model for future masterpieces.<sup>50</sup> Perhaps Marckwort learnt of this element through Bernhard Wanschaff who probably had close links to Leipzig: Bernhard's godfather had been a cabinet-maker from that city, Heinrich Bernhard Wahnschaff.<sup>51</sup>

Fig. 15  
 Detail of fig. 4.





## &gt; Fig. 16

CARL WILHELM  
MARCKWORT,  
*A Secrétaire*,  
Berlin, 1822.  
Graphite,  
pen and black ink,  
watercolour,  
404 x 265 mm.  
Berlin,  
Kunstabibliothek,  
inv. no. 2012,77,  
Hdz 12379.

**The Provenance of the Drawings**

As stated earlier, the eight drawings acquired by the Rijksmuseum come from a larger group, which was recorded as early as 1925 as belonging to the Braunschweig *Tischlermeister* Kautzsch.<sup>52</sup> The first Braunschweig cabinet-maker of this name was Friedrich Theodor (1843-1917) who worked in Braunschweig as cabinet-maker from 1869, initially on a mere licence and from 1884 as a member of the guild.<sup>53</sup> He may have acquired the drawings shortly after Marckwort's death, which was soon followed by that of his widow.<sup>54</sup> By then the drawings had become records of a historical style, many examples of which were still present in the furnishings of Braunschweig houses. For Kautzsch this large group of signed and dated drawings will have been of interest as testimony of the high quality, both of technical drawing and of craftsmanship, of times past.

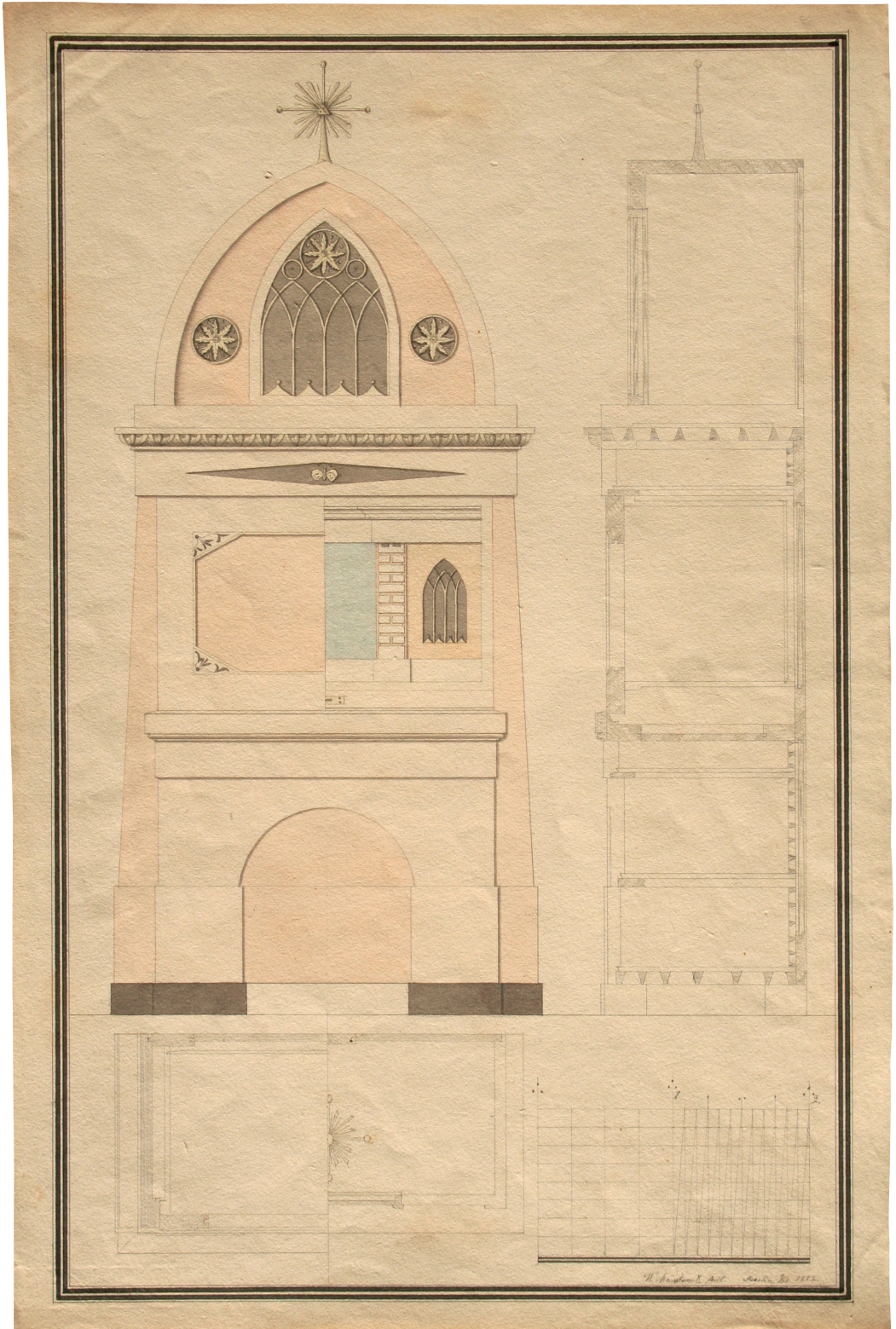
Around 1905 Carl Kautzsch, who produced furniture in various historical styles,<sup>55</sup> established himself in Braunschweig's Wilhelmstrasse, where the workshop was continued as a *Kunst- und Möbeltischlerei* by his son, Carl Johannes (1880-1947), until 1944. After the war it was led by his widow

Hermine (1898-1970), a cabinet-maker's daughter and one of the first female master cabinet-makers. She was succeeded by her son Karl Ferdinand (1928-1976), who in 1969 celebrated the firm's centenary. Shortly after, some of the drawings were first published. In his dissertation on Braunschweig writing desks, Franz-Josef Christiani illustrated eight of them.<sup>56</sup> One of those was recently acquired by the Kunstbibliothek in Berlin (fig. 16), while two others are part of the group bought by the Rijksmuseum. This also includes six drawings that until now were entirely unknown. In the late 1970s, the heirs of Karl Kautzsch sold many of the Marckwort drawings, but those recently acquired by the Rijksmuseum were kept by a *Tischlermeister* from the next generation, Wolfgang Kautzsch (born 1958), who sold them only recently. During research for this article, about twenty of those sold earlier were located in a private collection. Eight are of *secrétaires*,<sup>57</sup> three of corner cupboards, three of *trumeaux*, one of a bookcase, two of tables, one of a large standing looking glass, and two of sofas. It is entirely typical that these drawings should owe their survival to professional interest, rather than appreciation of their artistic merit.

## ABSTRACT

The Rijksmuseum recently acquired eight furniture designs, drawn by the cabinet-maker from Braunschweig, Carl Wilhelm Marckwort (1798-1875), while working as a journeyman in Berlin, in the years 1820-23. Apart from another group by Marckwort, no similar drawings made in Berlin during the first half of the nineteenth century survive, although they must once have been common. They were not regarded as works of art, and those that may have been retained in Berlin were lost during the Second World War. Marckwort took his drawings with him when he returned to Braunschweig in 1824, where they have until recently been kept by a succession of local cabinet-makers.

Marckwort's drawings present much information on current Berlin furniture types, and they document the high level of draughtsmanship attained by a talented craftsman working there. In Berlin, as in Vienna and indeed also in Braunschweig, much attention was given from the late eighteenth century onwards to providing drawing lessons for apprentices and journeymen. This was seen as an important step in an effort to improve the quality of manufactured goods. Marckwort's manner of drawing, linear rather than free, exemplifies the workings of the new educational system. Sadly, no documentation concerning his training has been found.



- \* I am grateful to Reinier Baarsen for his translation and helpful suggestions, the anonymous peer reviewers for their corrections and advice, and Fabienne Meyer of the Kupferstichkabinett Staatliche Museen zu Berlin for her help with the technical investigation of the drawings.
- 1 Provenance: Carl Wilhelm Marckwort (1798-1875); upon his death probably acquired by Friedrich Theodor Kautzsch (1843-1917); by descent to Wolfgang Kautzsch (1958-); art dealer Viebahn, Worpsswede (cat. *Geplante Schönheit IV: Entwurfszeichnungen für Kunsthandwerk & Interieur*, 2018, no. 29); bought with funds from the bequest of Ms J.D. Driessen, 2018, inv. nos. RP-T-2019-175 to 182.
  - 2 Signatures and inscriptions: lower right: *W.Marckwort. fecit. Berlin. 20*; on the pediment of the secretaire: *LIEBE, GÜTE, TUGEND, SCHÖNHEIT*; below the scale:  $\frac{1}{2}$  *Fuss*. Watermark: *J WHATMAN| TURKEY MILLS| 1821*. Literature: Franz-Josef Christiani, *Schreibmöbelentwürfe zu Meisterstücken Braunschweiger Tischler aus der 1. Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Braunschweig 1979, fig. 48; Achim Stiegel, *Berliner Möbelkunst vom Ende des 18. bis zur Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin 2003, pp. 117, 341-45, figs. 76 and xi, 2-3.
  - 3 Helmut Börsch-Supan (ed.), *Die Kataloge der Berliner Akademie-Ausstellungen 1786-1850*, Berlin 1971, vol. 1, 1812, p. 57, no. 544.
  - 4 Christiani 1979 (note 2), fig. 50 (detail); Stiegel 2003 (note 2), p. 342, xi, fig. 4.
  - 5 Akademie der Künste Berlin, Historisches Archiv, PrAdK, no. 138, p. 4: request by Bernhard Wanschaff, 31 October 1812.
  - 6 *Ibid.*, p. 5: '[Sie] könne einen Geschmack, der es zuließe in und an Schränken, Säulen, Facaden oder gar halbe Tempel anzubringen, nicht billigen, indem solches mobile Körper sind, auch dergleichen theils dem Gebrauche derselben nicht angemessen, sondern sogar hinderlich ist.'
  - 7 Including the measurements, which are elucidated in the adapted 1:1 scale; cf. Thomas Andersch and Katrin Heise, "'Da der Geschmack in dergleichen Dingen sich mit der Zeit ändert...'" Die neue Meisterstückverordnung der Leipziger Tischlerinnung von 1801', in *Vornehmste Tischlerarbeiten aus Leipzig*, F.G. Hoffmann, Hoftischler und Unternehmer, Dresden 2016, pp. 102-05.
  - 8 Signatures and inscriptions: lower right: *W. Marckwort. fecit. | 1821*. Watermark: *J WHATMAN| TURKEY MILLS| 1819*.
  - 9 Jan Mende, *Nutzbringende Schönheit – ein Viktoriakandelaber aus Holzbronze*, December 2015, <https://www.lightandglass.eu/entation> Centre for Chandeliers, Light and Lighting, [https://www.lightandglass.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/ViktoriaKandelaber\\_online\\_9Dez2015\\_FINALfassung.pdf](https://www.lightandglass.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/ViktoriaKandelaber_online_9Dez2015_FINALfassung.pdf).
  - 10 Signatures and inscriptions: lower right: *W.Marckwort. fecit. Berlin 20*; below the scale: *1/ 2*. Watermark: *J WHATMAN| TURKEY MILLS| 1819*. Literature: Christiani 1979 (note 2), fig. 69.
  - 11 Private collection; Christiani 1979 (note 2), fig. 68; Stiegel 2003 (note 2), fig. 158.
  - 12 Signature: lower right: *W.Marckwort. Berlin 6/16. 22*.
  - 13 Signatures and inscriptions: lower right: *W.M.*; below the scale: *1./ 2./ 3. Fuss*. Watermark: *WHATMAN| 1820*.
  - 14 Signature: lower right: *Berlin. Marckwort. 7/14. 22*.
  - 15 Signature: lower right: *W. Marckwort. fecit Berlin 3-2.23*.
  - 16 Signature: lower right: *W. Marckwort. fecit*. Watermark: *WHATMAN| 1820*.
  - 17 Stadtarchiv Braunschweig (hereafter StAB), G III 1: St Ulrici, baptisms 1782-1804, p. 761; marriages 1797-1814, p. 571.
  - 18 StAB, G III 1: 220, St Ulrici.
  - 19 StAB, G III 1: St Andreas, marriages 1786, p. 207. In 1753 he offered his masterpiece for sale in the *Braunschweigische Anzeigen*; Franz Fuhse, *Vom Braunschweiger Tischlerhandwerk – Stobwasserarbeiten*, Braunschweig 1925, p. 38.
  - 20 Inv. nos. 1640-0001-00, 1640-0002-00 and 1640-0003-00. On the *Meisterrisse*, see Fuhse 1925 (note 19), pp. 32-40, figs. 13-15; Andrea Winter, *Meisterstücke der Braunschweiger Tischlergilde: Die großen Braunschweiger Schränke von 1685 bis 1789: Gildegeschichtliche Voraussetzungen und kunstgeschichtliche Aspekte*, diss. Braunschweig 1995, pp. 83-84, 158.
  - 21 StAB, G III 1: St Magni, funerals 1813, p. 167.
  - 22 StAB, G III 1: 79, St Katharinen.
  - 23 Stiegel 2003 (note 2), pp. 116-17, 534-35.
  - 24 A Jacob Friedrich Markwort, who was born in 1778 in Alsleben an der Saale, was listed in the directories from 1823 onwards, first as painter, and subsequently as writing master, member of the Academy, and head of a private school for drawing and writing. In 1819 and 1829 he published manuals for these arts. However, he appears to be in no way connected with Carl Wilhelm.
  - 25 <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:gbv:084-12013115584>.
  - 26 StAB, D VII 1: 164 Tischlergilde, accounts 1822-1864, volume for 1825, p. 21, Ausgaben,

- I. Behufs Aufhebung unbefugter Arbeit; volume for 1826, p. 12, Einnahmen, VII. An rückständigen Quartalsgeldern, Meister, and 17, Ausgaben, I. Behufs Aufhebung unbefugter Arbeit; StAB, D VIII 1: 161 Tischlergilde, Bewerbungen um die Meisterschaft 1834-1851. The index to the act of around 1826 for Johanna Sophia Elisabeth Markworth née Heuer, which is now missing, notes: 'In dieser Acte befinden sich auch die Gesuche um Niederschlagung einer wegen unbefugter Betreibung des Tischlergewerbes wider dieselbe eingeleiteten Untersuchung u. Zurückgabe einiger in Beschlag genommener Handwerksgeräthschaften.'
- 27 StAB, C III 8: Handel und Gewerbe, no. 47 (Tischler) and D VII 1: 158 (Tischlergilde). Marckwort's case does not figure in this source.
- 28 Christiani 1979 (note 2), pp. 71, 110, fig. 18.
- 29 See footnote 11; the secretaire, which is signed and dated, is in a private collection.
- 30 Among the 23 *Meisterrisse* from Braunschweig that have been preserved from the years 1815-38, only two others show this feature, which however becomes more common from 1839 onwards; Christiani 1979 (note 2).
- 31 StAB, G III 1, St Magni, funerals 1833, p. 250.
- 32 She was the daughter of a French brandy-producer from Marienborn; StAB, G III 1: St Katharinen, marriages 1838, p. 64.
- 33 StAB, G III 1: St Ulrici, funerals 1873, December-1875, p. 32.
- 34 StAB, D I 7, testaments, no. 73, pp. 103-07.
- 35 A ruling pen consists of two pointed pieces of metal, linked by a screw. By adjusting the screw the width of the line may be varied. I thank Fabienne Meyer for her assistance.
- 36 Anne Pimlott Baker, 'James Whatman' (entries on father and son), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford 2004.
- 37 See Christiani 1979 (note 2), fig. 68.
- 38 Ludwig Häselmann, *Das erste Jahrhundert der Waisenhaussschule in Braunschweig*, Braunschweig 1897, pp. 260-70, 335, 410, 417-20.
- 39 *Ibid.*, pp. 419-20; cf. Winter 1995 (note 20), p. 85, note 158.
- 40 StAB, F V: 686-689. Schulgeldlisten der Waisenhaus-Schule für die Jahre 1809-1812, on the Härder children no. 686, p. 42, nos. 3, 4; p. 43, nos. 2, 17.
- 41 See Wolfgang Kemp, '... einen wahrhaft bildenden Zeichenunterricht überall einzuführen': *Zeichnen und Zeichenunterricht der Laien 1500-1870: Ein Handbuch*, Frankfurt am Main 1979, pp. 188-201.
- 42 Cf. Jan Mende, *Die Tonwarenfabrik Tobias Chr. Feilner in Berlin: Kunst und Industrie im Zeitalter Schinkels*, Berlin 2013, pp. 281-90.
- 43 Matthias Hahn, "'... ächte vollendete Werke der bildenden Künste im Kleinen, worauf im Grossen das Wohl des Staates sich bildet'", in Charlotte Schreiter and Albrecht Pyritz (eds.), *Berliner Eisen: Die Königliche Eisen-giesserei*, Hannover-Laatzten 2007, pp. 188-92.
- 44 Akademie der Künste Berlin, Historisches Archiv, PrAdK 0008, fols. 74 (verso), 75.
- 45 Christiane Brandt-Salloum (ed.), *Klosterstrasse 36: Sammeln, Ausstellen, Patentieren*, exh. cat. Berlin (Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz) 2014.
- 46 Stiegel 2003 (note 2), pp. 61-65.
- 47 Among the thirty-two known drawings by Marckwort, twelve are annotated with the day they were executed. Two were drawn on a Wednesday, two on a Saturday, and the eight remaining on a Sunday. For the years 1810-23 ten volumes of lists of pupils are held in the archives of the Akademie der Künste, mainly for the classes of free drawing. In 2015 a project was started to digitize all the names, but so far the *Kunst- und Gewerbeschulen* have not been fully dealt with. For the research on Marckwort, the nos. 632, 637-42, 668, 687 and 688 were consulted.
- 48 Gabriele Fabiankowitsch and Christian Witt-Döring, *Genormte Fantasie: Zeichenunterricht für Tischler Wien 1800-1840*, Vienna/Cologne/Weimar 1996; see in particular figs. 2-4, 10.
- 49 Reinier Baarsen and Esther van der Hoorn, 'Acquisitions: Drawings for Objects', *The Rijksmuseum Bulletin* 64 (2016), pp. 182-83, no. 21.
- 50 Andersch and Heise 2016 (note 7), p. 95, figs. 5, 6.
- 51 Stiegel 2003 (note 2), p. 534.
- 52 Fuhse 1925 (note 19), p. 46.
- 53 StAB, G VIII: 531 Meisterbuch der Tischlermeister, 1797-1885, no. 17 (=263). The biographical information comes from family records kept by the Kautzsch family in Klein Dahlum near Braunschweig.
- 54 She died on 25 March 1875, aged 67: StAB, G III 1: St Ulrici, funerals 1873, December-1875, p. 35.
- 55 *Jubiläumsschrift der Fa. Kautzsch*, Braunschweig 1969, p. 1.
- 56 Christiani 1979 (note 2), figs. 48, 50, 58, 59, 68, 69, 72, 75, 79; seven of these also reproduced in Stiegel 2003 (note 2).
- 57 Christiani 1979 (note 2), figs. 58, 59, 68.