

Knole Settee, Cowdray Park, English, Lengyon & Co, olive velvet,  
tapestry  
LENGYON & CO

£18,000



REF: 11276

Height: 111 cm (43.7")

Width: 176 cm (69.3")

Depth: 69 cm (27.2")

## Description

- EXCEPTIONALLY, RARE, MUSEUM QUALITY PIECE, THE COWDRAY PARK KNOLE SETTEE, INVENTORY NUMBER D2029 - Supplied by Lengyon & Co, the pre-eminent maker, to Viscount Cowdray, Cowdray Park, Sussex. Part of the furnishings in the Great Hall at Cowdray Park, bearing a brass disc with the inventory number D2029 - In the late-19th century this model of settee was revived, particularly for Great Halls, bedrooms and galleries in large country houses for its early aesthetic, comfort and draught exclusion from the high backs. - It retains the original iron ratchets so the wings can be lowered to different heights.

- The 17th century Brussels tapestry panel is finely woven with a central cartouche and floral sprays and, unusually, retains its blue colouring - The settee has been re-upholstered in a sage green velvet as the original was threadbare when I acquired it. - The passmenterie has been colour-dyed to match the tones of the velvet and the tapestry and hand-made. - It is extremely comfortable, you sink back into it. - It is sturdy and suitable for everyday use as the velvet has 100 years of life in it and the tapestry has been cleaned, conserved and stabilised This is an early 20th century interpretation of the infamous, sumptuously, upholstered, 17th century, couch with hinged arm rests, found at Knole Park, Sevenoaks, Kent, the ancestral seat of the Sackvilles made by the most eminent upholsterer of the early 20th century. The original couch served the dual purpose of bed and settee, and is one of the earliest examples of English, upholstered, seat furniture. This is a particularly fine example, with an exceptional provenance.

The straight, padded back incorporating a piece of mid-17th century tapestry depicting a characteristic baroque cartouche with cornucopia containing tulips surrounded by a profusion of floral sprays and bunches of grapes. The adjustable padded wings joined to the arms with ratched iron hinges and attached to the back. The arms are supported by oak turned uprights, one bearing the Cowdray Park inventory number D2029 on a brass disc. The seat with a large loose cushion. Standing on original castors. English, second half of the 19th century. The original silk damask was threadbare and the settee has been re-upholstered in a grey/green velvet with custom made passmenterie. Closed Length 176 cm. 69 ¼ in, Fully Extended Length 254. 100 in., Depth 69 cm. 27 in., Height 111 cm. 43 ½ in. seat height 54 cm. 21 ¼ in.

During the late-16th/early 17th century a new form of day-bed was introduced to match the contemporary upholstered 'X' chairs and stools. They were padded and upholstered throughout and the ends were let down on a toothed steel ratchet to enable the occupant to repose at full length. They were generally destroyed when the coverings had worn out at the woodwork was of little value. One survives at Knole Park, illustrated above.

Similar couches were plentiful in France under Louis XIII and can be seen in Abraham Bosse's engravings of domestic interiors but they were only found at Court and the houses of great noblemen in this country. When the contents of the Royal Palaces were dispersed after Charles I's execution a number of couches were included in the sal...