Cushion cover

Place of origin: Flanders (region) (made)
Date: circa 1575 (made)
Artist/Maker: Unknown
Materials and Techniques: Tapestry-woven in wool and silk with gold and silver thread; 22-23 warp threads per inch (9 per cm)
Credit Line: Bequeathed by Edward Salmon Clarke
Museum number: T.278-1913
Gallery location: British Galleries, Room 58b, case 6

Public access description

Object Type
Tapestry-woven wall hangings and smaller pieces for furnishing were produced in large numbers in Flanders, Holland, north Germany and other weaving centres in the 16th century. This is one of a set of six cushion covers that tell the story of the Prodigal Son from the New Testament. The sophistication of the design and the evenness of the weaving, along with the clear colours, distinguish this piece from an English cushion cover (see museum no. T.1-1933 in the British Galleries). The figures are also larger and better drawn than those in English cushion covers, and the borders are typically Flemish.

Use
Tapestry cushions were used in most Northern European countries. Houses were very sparsely furnished by modern standards and chairs were usually reserved for the master and mistress of the house. Cushions were vital in making benches and stools less uncomfortable.

Descriptive line
The Prodigal Son Departs

Physical description
Cushion cover

Dimensions
Height: 54 cm, Width: 53 cm

Museum number
T.278-1913

Object history note
Made in Flanders (present-day Belgium and part of The Netherlands)

URL
http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O78814/cushion-cover-unknown/