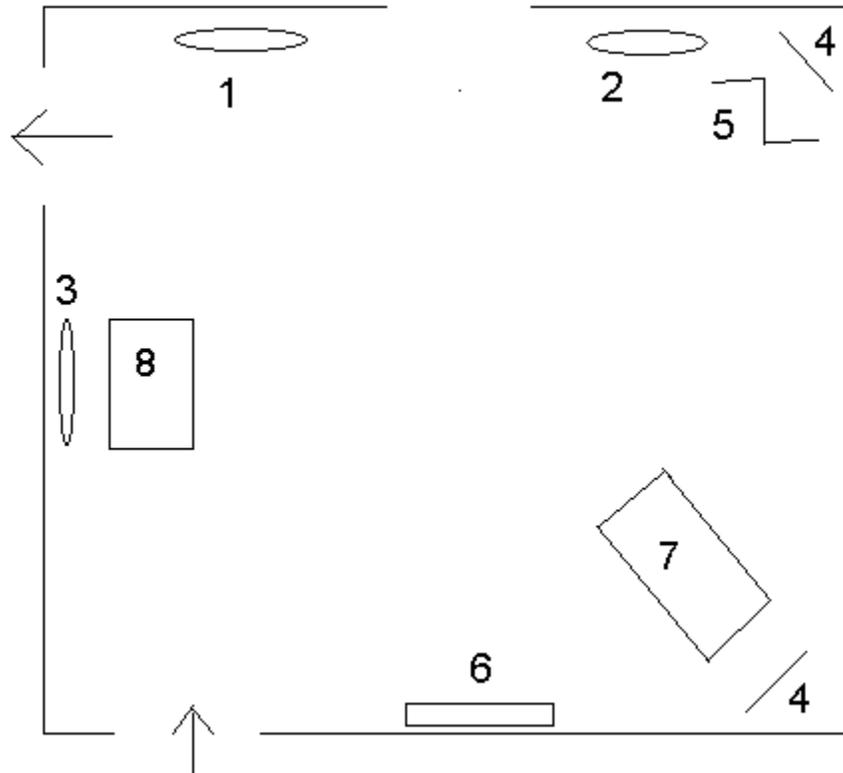


## LOUIS XIV SITTING ROOM (04 E)



In October 1675 the ambassadors of Louis XIV (1638-1715) and Charles II of Spain (1660-1700) concluded here a commercial treaty fixing tariffs for goods moving on the Meuse and the Sambre rivers. On this occasion coffee was served for the first time in our region, a drink that was very fashionable at the Court of Versailles since the Ambassador of Turkey had made a gift of roasted coffee to the Sun King .

The panelling of this room and its furniture, playing with curves, are typical of the Regency and Louis XV styles.

- (1) A satirical portrait of the Sun King, the original of which is to be found in the Royal Palace Het Loo (Netherlands), home of William of Orange (1650-1702), Stadholder of the Netherlands and King of England, an irreducible opponent of Louis XIV. This portrait was repeatedly copied and distributed throughout Europe, except in France, of course. The Sun King is made to look ridiculous by his hand that is like a woman's, by the satyr under the arm-rest, the comedian's wig, a dress worthy of a Cit turned Gentleman, a staff for going to war instead of the royal sceptre, the order of the Holy Spirit disproportionately enlarged and by his seated position.

- (2) A portrait of a gentleman in black (from the Frans Hals school, 1621). Devoted to Protestantism, he wears sober clothing, but cannot hide his red nose (a consequence of drinking too much Dutch gin). He was wearing the collar of the Order of the Golden Fleece, but it was discovered when restoring the painting that it had been added in the 19th century.
- (3) From Mignard School, you see a fine portrait of Renée of Glimes, Countess of Bryas by marriage (1639). Her gestures, her attitude and her facial expression are reminiscent of the heroines of Molière (1622-1673): the Learned Ladies (les Femmes Savantes) or the Conceited Ladies (Les Précieuses Ridicules). It is up to you to decide which one. Note the abundance of pearls she wears on her necklace, bracelets, hair ornaments and even the button closing her bodice. At that time pearls were more valuable than diamonds. That gives you an idea how affluent she was.
- (4) Two large engravings depict the siege of Dinant (above the folding screen) and of Luxemburg (facing it) from paintings by Adam-Francis van der Meulen (Brussels 1632-Paris 1690) appointed painter of the battles of Louis XIV.
- (5) Engravings of the main ports of France at the time of Louis XIV. Many ports were then created by Colbert, who developed a merchant and military navy that was able to compete with the other two big fleets of the time: the Dutch and the British.
- (6) The fireplace in rose-coloured St Remy marble comes from the Cistercian Monastery of Rochefort. This type of marble was highly sought after from the 16<sup>th</sup> century. It is found even at Versailles.
- (7) “ Duchesse “: a couch in the Regency style (1715-1723), on which women of fashion laid down while reading.
- (8) The console is also in the Regency style.

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