

SILVER STUDIES

*The Journal of
The Silver Society*

NUMBER 21

2006





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Silver Studies is published by The Silver Society, a registered charity, no279352.

ISSN 1743-2677

Issues 1-15 of this journal were titled *The Silver Society Journal*.
ISSN 0960-8745

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Please see the end of this journal for information about back issues. This can also be found on the Society's website:

www.thesilversociety.org

Printed in England by
Cromwell Press Ltd,
Trowbridge, Wilts.

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From the editor

The pages of my favourite quarterly, *Slightly Foxed*, fell open at an article titled 'Edit and be damned'. I read:

Editing must be one of the few professions that require no professional training. Even a plumber needs to learn how to plumb before he's allowed to attack pipes. An editor, on the other hand, just takes up his spanner and blowtorch and starts editing. Of course there are a lot of different kinds of editors ... but they all share this same amateur, self-taught quality. Editing is something that you tend to fall into, though perhaps not entirely by accident. ...

Quite so. And I cannot tell you how grateful I am to contributors to this journal for the tolerance you have shown and for teaching me what seems to have become my trade. I hope I have learned to be less heavy-handed with the blowtorch but I am still on a huge learning curve, never quite sure if the role of an editor of a journal like this should be pro-active or a damage limitation exercise.

The job this year has been not just to produce this journal but also a special issue, *Rococo silver in England and its colonies*, the papers given at a seminar in Richmond, Virginia, in 2004. It created an entirely different set of challenges, both for me and those who contributed to the publication, all of whom are members of the Society or subscribers to our journal. Foremost of these challenges was the need to translate the audio-visual experience of a lecture onto paper – actually to interpret the text so that the objects, which the speaker/author was initially discussing with the aid of slides (ok - and Powerpoint), are there on the same page as the text, making the comparisons that a speaker is able to do with two screens. We attempt to match text and illustrations in every issue of the journal, of course, but the coherence of the seminar papers really gives the reader the chance to look in detail at the wonderful objects of this extraordinary time. In the book this is set against surveys and new research of the social and political history of England, France and America. It's the latest word in research on the period and our first full-colour production. I hope you will each purchase a copy.

This issue of *Silver Studies* contains two articles that mark the final phase of the renewal of the Silver Galleries at the Victoria and Albert Museum. The church plate gallery was opened in 2005, and there are articles on Judaica and Nonconformism by curators at the museum. The series of galleries has taken several years to transform, those responsible successfully rising to the challenge offered by the patronage of the Whiteley Trust.

The nearest I get to commissioning an article is asking someone to follow up an idea that may have emerged in conversation. The gambit usually falls on stony ground – after all, to agree to write always means a lot of work for no monetary reward – but occasionally a real gem has resulted. Over the years a lot of potentially good ideas have failed to turn into words on paper; I slightly regret not having kept a list of those that disappeared on the wind, but look forward to what blows in each year instead, usually nowadays via email. A budding success story is the slot titled *People*, reminding us of the 'giants' who have gone before us.

Please continue to send in your ideas for articles and keep me in touch with what you are researching and may wish to publish in the near future. You may like to turn to p4, where there is a further note on this subject.

Vanessa Brett

In this journal

Dates are written in the following styles:

Calendar year pre 1752

1 January – 24 March

1563/4

Assay year (before 1975)

1563/64

More than one calendar year

1563–67

Weights are in grams and troy ounces unless otherwise stated. There are 20 pennyweights (dwt) to the troy ounce (oz). 1 troy oz = 31.103g; 100g = 3.2 troy oz (approx)

Monetary values

referred to in this journal usually refer to the time before the United Kingdom converted to decimal currency on 15 February 1971; we give below pound Sterling values:

£1 (pound) = 20

shillings (s); 1 shilling = 12 pennies (d)

1 guinea = £1 1s

One third of a pound = 6s 8d; two thirds = 13s 4d.

Unless stated otherwise, all items illustrated are silver.

2006 bullion prices:

April: £5.48 per ounce

September: £5.26 per ounce Sterling

(see p7)

See pp14 and 143 for details of the cover illustration.

Any opinions stated in this journal are those of the individual author. Every effort is made to maintain the highest standards but the Silver Society does not guarantee the complete accuracy of opinions or stated facts published here.

Our contributors

Clare Barry studied Material Culture, Architecture and Museum Studies at Leeds University and is a recent graduate of the joint Masters course in History of Design run by the V&A and the Royal College of Art and the recipient of the Friends of the V&A Scholarship. She has a personal interest in subjects traditionally overlooked within architecture and the decorative arts.

Simon Bliss* is Deputy Course Leader of the MA in Design at University College for the Creative Arts at Rochester.

Vanessa Brett** edits this journal.

Peter Cameron* gained a degree in history at Peterhouse, Cambridge and shortly thereafter began dealing. His interest in silver began when very young, stimulated by stories about his grandfather, Sydney Bellamy Harman of Harman & Lambert.

Rachel Conroy* has worked as Assistant Curator (Metalwork) at Sheffield Galleries & Museums Trust since August 2004. During this time she has been conducting research around the Designated Metalwork Collection, including the Bill Brown collection of Historic Cutlery and also contributed to the redisplay of the Metalwork Gallery. Most recently, she curated the exhibition *Silver City: James Dixon & Sons 1806-2006*.

Simon Davidson** was chairman of the Society 2001-02. He and his wife Cathlyn have had a 35-year interest in silver, with a particular focus on Chester and surrounding areas. They enjoy researching the lives of goldsmiths.

Rodney Dietert* is a professor at Cornell University, author of more than 250 science publications. As a

devoted student of Scottish silver, he recently authored a book on that subject and is preparing a second reference work on the Edinburgh goldsmiths. Janice Dietert is a novelist, learning disability specialist, herbalist and photographer. Her writings include publications on silver and several works of fiction.

Anthony Dove* has been a member of the Arms and Armour Society since 1959 and the Silver Society and Silver Study Group since 1983. He is also the Hon. President of the Silver Spoon Club of Great Britain (publishers of the bi-monthly *Finial*).

Ann Eatwell* is a curator in the Department of Sculpture, Metalwork, Ceramics and Glass in the Victoria and Albert Museum. She has published widely on numerous subjects including ceramics, the history of dining and A.W.N. Pugin's metalwork. She created the display on Nonconformist Silver for the new Sacred Silver and Stained Glass galleries at the V&A.

Johann Michael Fritz was a curator in Bonn and Karlsruhe before becoming lecturer at the universities at Bonn, Basel and Freiburg. He was Professor for the history of medieval art and decorative arts at the University of Heidelberg 1983-98 and is now retired.

Christopher Garibaldi has worked for English Heritage, the Royal Collection and at Norwich Castle Museum, where from 1998 to 2003 he was Assistant Keeper of Decorative Art. He is currently a freelance art historian.

Christopher Hartop** is on the committee of the Society and was chairman 2002-03. Books include *British and Irish Silver in the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University* (2006)

and *Royal Goldsmiths: the Art of Rundell & Bridge* (2005).

Louise Hofman* is Assistant Curator, Metalwork, Silver and Jewellery Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.

Kathryn Jones* is Assistant Curator, Works of Art, in the Royal Collection, where she has worked for four years. She has also worked in the Silver Department of Partridge Fine Arts.

Luke Schrager* was brought up in the silver trade. After working for the Goldsmiths' Company, undertaking research into the eighteenth-century workmen the documentation of whose marks have been lost, he gained an MA from St Andrews University and then a further MA from London University, the dissertation of which forms the basis of his article in this issue.

Karin Tebbe* received a PhD in 1994. She has worked on the Nuremberg Goldsmiths research project at the Germanische Nationalmuseum since 2000, having joined the museum in 1998.

* Member of the Society or regular subscriber to this Journal, either personally or through an institution.

** Past chairman of the Society.

Getting involved in silver

If I have seen further it is by standing on the shoulders of giants. Isaac Newton 1675/6.

Some months after John Culme first went to work at Sotheby's in 1964 he was told in all seriousness that pretty well everything there was to be known about English silver had already been discovered. Wet behind the ears as the nineteen-year-old then was, he privately questioned this statement. When news got out that the Society had agreed to publish the papers of the seminar on the rococo, held at Richmond, Virginia in 2004, one member questioned the decision on the grounds that there was nothing new to be learned about that period of English silver. In the intervening 40 years huge strides have been taken in silver research and our conception of the subject has been transformed, but once you read *Rococo in England*, you will know that there is still a very great deal to be learned about the mid-eighteenth century – as there is about every period. No-one's work can ever be the last word on a subject, for there will always be new discoveries as everyone builds on the work of earlier authorities, particularly as silver covers such a broad sweep of subject matter.

This journal is witness to that truism and, though the work of silver historians and practitioners bears no comparison with Newton, it is fair to say that it builds on the work of giants in our field. Even the work of the great Rosenberg is being subsumed by the energies of a new generation (see p39). It is particularly apposite that, following last year's piece on Sir Charles Jackson, we are able to publish a photograph of his German contemporary. It makes for a nice introduction to the Society's potential involvement with the work of Jackson's successor, Arthur Grimwade. Members of the Society have created the beginnings of a new research project: information from Grimwade's *London Goldsmiths 1697–1837* has been put into a database, beginning with addresses. It enables us to see which craftsmen were neighbours and follow the handing-on of workshops through generations. Linked to Judy Jowett's work *The Warning Carriers* (which the Society published in 2005), it makes for a formidable body of material.

Earlier this year, one of the Society's meetings was devoted to explaining the research that members are doing, in the hope that others would be bitten by the research bug. We know that many people are working away on their own projects. We would like to be able to link up some of this research through the Society's website and it would be particularly helpful to know of readers' interests – partly to avoid duplication (see p8) but also to put people in touch with one another. In comparison to the fine arts, those working on silver are a

tiny band of devotees and there is so much material, so many exciting ideas, to be pursued! The Society's research and publications committee is increasingly receiving ideas and requests for help and is building up a small list of possible future projects. Do contact us if you would like to get involved. We hope we can offer encouragement and advice if you have your own plans, or find a new project that you would enjoy working on. That word 'enjoy' is the most important – for why should you spend weeks or months on something that, once you have delved a little way, you find has not grabbed your interest? If on the other hand, any reader is able to give us advice on the innumerable ways that information is compiled on computers and the Internet (which system do you find easier to use?), we will welcome your assistance. See, for example, p58 of this journal for a project by American members of the Society.

The Society is increasingly concerned to encourage a new generation to enjoy silver – the object themselves, researching the subject, and the camaraderie that develops amongst those in thrall to the subject. New ideas are constantly coming to our notice and we are hoping to develop links with students and their tutors, particularly in researching the immensely varied topics related to the history of silver. My own experience of students of all ages is that there is an increasing tendency to focus on words on a screen or in a book, rather than to look at actual objects – or even original documents. Whilst on the one hand this is understandable, on the other I personally feel that to research something without ever attempting to handle objects of the kind that are documented, is a rather soulless exercise, and it is sad to see students almost frightened of picking up an 'old' piece that was made to withstand the wear and tear of daily use. We must somehow encourage twenty- and thirty-somethings to enjoy the wonderful silver that is being made today by their contemporaries, and also pieces that were made in the past for people of a similar age to themselves, on marriage, coming-of-age celebrations or the christenings of their children. It is only in the past thirty years that the concept of silver being part of the daily life of a large sector of society has faded. If owners of silver these days could be persuaded to let youngsters do as those in the photograph opposite could do, how could anyone resist being interested in the stuff! As one person commented on seeing it 'the image should be compulsory viewing for all glove-bedecked silver curators worldwide'!

To this end – learning how to look at silver, rather than just reading an art historian's views – the Society holds 'hands-on' sessions for its members (mostly without white gloves), designed to encourage the novice to learn



A SILVER PUNCH BOWL BELONGING TO THE DUKE OF RUTLAND

This huge bowl was made by Child's Bank in 1682 and sold to the then Earl of Rutland, in whose family it is still preserved. The children in the bowl are the son and daughters of the Marquis and Marchioness of Granby

John Culme found this image in Tatler (London, 11 February 1903, p208). The photograph of the Manners family, children of the 8th Duke of Rutland, must have been taken at least nine years previously. The cistern, Ralph Leeke, London 1681/82, is now in the grand dining room at Belvoir Castle, 114.5cm (45in) long, and weighs 1,979oz.

From right to left the children are: John, future 9th Duke of Rutland (born 1886); Marjorie (born 1883) who married the Marquess of Anglesey; Violet Catherine (born 1888) the future Lady Elcho; and Robert (Lord Haddon, born 1885) who died in 1894.

See p6 for more on the cistern.

from handling silver (which is usually kindly made available by dealers and auction houses). We hope, in the future, to extend these sessions for people at all levels of knowledge. Readers of this journal include 'professionals' and also many 'amateurs' in the old-fashioned sense of that word: people who know a great deal, but who do not earn their living from the subject. Both groups like nothing better than to meet and talk (or write about) about their interests and impart their knowledge: it is the *raison d'être* of this Society. However, we must be on our guard:

The main thing was to be sure that the members all had enough cocktails so they could endure the paper but not so many cocktails that they would become noisy or fall asleep during the paper's progress ... that scholarly work, entitled 'Certain Old Teaspoons', written by Mr Norton Swing ... This was a double-header, because you not only had to hear all about the certain old teaspoons, but you had to examine them afterwards one by one.²

Maybe it is more difficult than we realise to shake off a certain reputation, even from half a century ago?

We must hope that the feeling many people have at present, that computers and globalisation leave no time for our inner selves, or a multiplicity of interests, is a problem of transition into a brave new world and a phase that will not last. Like editing (see p2), silver is something that you tend to fall into by accident, but a gentle nudge to others to participate would help us develop and fulfil the Society's potential and, we believe, give pleasure to many.

Vanessa Brett

1 A watercolour of the future 7th Earl of Stamford with his sister and cousins, seated in George Booth's cistern of 1729/30, is the frontispiece to James Lomax and James Rothwell, *Country House Silver from*

Dunham Massey, The National Trust 2006.

2 John P. Marquand, *Point of No Return*, New York 1949, chapter 10. (Previously in Newsletter 25.)

The wine cistern illustrated on p5 is described by J. Starkie Gardner in a two-part article on silver at Belvoir Castle. Bearing the mark of Ralph Leeke, 1681/82, it measures '4ft at its greatest diameter' (122cm) and is 18¾in (47.5cm) high; 'the whole stands upon four large claw feet 7½ inches high (19cm), clasping balls 5 inches in diameter' (12.7cm). It bears the arms of the 9th Earl of Rutland (1638–1711) who was made Marquess of Granby and Duke of Rutland in 1703. At the time of the article (1906) 'No other use than to fill it with punch to the brim on gala occasions has been made of the majestic Belvoir specimen within present memory'. Maybe its use as a photographic prop was something the family, or their steward, decided not to mention to an acknowledged authority on silver!

In addition to illustrating the cistern Starkie Gardner illustrated the original receipt. Transcribed from the reproduction in *The Burlington Magazine*, the following may not be entirely accurate:

June the 12th 1682

For ord of the right hon^{ble} John Earl of Rutland by the hands of M^r Ffrancis Parfe[?] the sume of six hundred sixteen pounds and ten shillings in full for a silver cesterne weighing 1979^{oz}10^{dw} in full of all [----] debts and demands whatsoever to the day of the date hereof

616: 10: 00

For Mr Fran: Child & self
J^{no} Rogers

Starkie Gardner then goes on to describe and illustrate a fountain, made for the 3rd Duke (1696–1779), which bears Britannia marks for 1728/29 and is 27½in (70cm) high; unfortunately no maker is given. His description reminds us that we are still perhaps uncertain as to when fountains and cisterns were used to serve wine rather than as 'washers':¹

During the eighteenth century these huge wine coolers became associated with a correspondingly massive vessel called a 'wine fountain', which presented a more 'up to date' method of cooling wine. These consist of a large bowl on a foot, provided with a tap to draw the wine off, below a vessel with an ice chamber, fixed above it like a French percolating *cafetière*.

J. Starkie Gardner, 'Silver Plate at Belvoir Castle', *Burlington Magazine*, vol VIII, p397 and vol IX, p30.

VB

¹ So described in James Lomax and James Rothwell, *Country House Silver from Dunham Massey*, The National Trust 2006, p60. See also Pippa Shirley, 'A service for wine', *Antiques*, June 1998, on the Macclesfield set.

Corrections to journal no19 (2005)

Page 110. Philippa Glanville and the editor apologise for mis-spelling John Abecassis Philips's name.

From Eric Smith:

Page 127, no49, note 32. It was Sir Martin Bowes' second son, Martin, who married Robert Amadas's granddaughter Frances.

There is confusion over the name of Amadas's wife. *The Visitation of Essex* records: 'Robert Amydas of London Goldsmith (m) Margaret da & heir to James Bruce (Bryce).' And on another page: 'Robert Amydas of London, and Margery his wyef wch Margery was the daughter of James Boyesse.'¹ On the other hand, *The Victoria History of the County of Essex* noted that Sir Hugh Bryce's grandson and heir, Hugh, died 'without issue and was succeeded by his sister Elizabeth, who married Robert Amdas, Master of the Mint to Henry VIII'.² Philippa Glanville wrote of 'Amadas's marriage to Elizabeth, grand-daughter and heir of Sir Hugh Bryce...'.³ Who is right? Could it be that there was some confusion over Amadas's daughter, thus the *Visitation*

records 'Elizabeth d & heire to Robert Amadas'.

Page 128, no53, note 35. Timothy Kent has drawn my attention to an error. Thane should read Thame and Sir John Williams died in 1559. 'The very fine effigies (1559) of Lord Thame and his wife in Thame parish church.'⁴

Note 35, should read Wheatley p264. Eric Smith
¹ *Visitation of Essex 1558*, Harleian Society, 1878, p5 and p27.

² *The Victoria History of the County of Essex*, vol 5, 1966, pp199–200, 277.

³ Philippa Glanville, 'Robert Amadas, Goldsmith Court Jeweller to Henry VIII', *Proceedings of the Silver Society*, vol 3 no5, 1986, p108.

⁴ Source: Katharine Esdaile, *English Church Monuments*, Batsford 1946, pl 47.

Page 116. Last year's cover illustration, a porringer maker's mark TK, London 1670/71, provoked a letter from Timothy Kent. He pointed out that this maker's mark is identified as that of Thomas King in his *London Silver Spoonmakers*, 1981, p35. Thomas King was apprenticed to William Mouse and was the elder brother of John King, a spoonmaker. (*The editor's error, my apologies.*)

See also p8 for updated information on the Haraches.



When the Prince of Wales visited Sheffield in 2005 he met Bill Brown, whose collection of early cutlery is now at the Millennium Galleries. It is not often that members of the Society have the chance to discuss their interest with members of the royal family. Mr Brown's important collection is the basis for *British Cutlery*, edited by Peter Brown, 2001.

Sheffield's 2006 exhibition is highlighted in an article on p105.

The Green Vaults in Dresden are now open following their reconstruction after damage in the Second World War. Booking is essential before your visit.

News from the British Museum of two acquisitions, not in the field that this journal usually covers (but your editor believes we should not be too narrow in our interests):

The missing piece from the Sedgeford Torc (200–50BC), originally acquired in 1968, has been found and acquired by the museum.

The unique gold coin of Coenwulf, King of Mercia (796–821), who succeeded Offa, is the earliest gold coin intended for regular use as currency at home and abroad. It is one of only eight gold British coins known from the period 700–1250.

Bullion

At the beginning of each journal we print the bullion or scrap price of silver and gold, just for the record. These are usually taken from the pages of the Antiques Trade Gazette – an easy place to find the information. This Spring, though, national newspapers were full of the subject. The giddy heights of the days of Bunker Hunt's stockpiling in the 1970s were not reached, but nonetheless there was heavy trading in the metal markets.

'Metals hit as price of silver goes into freefall.' *The Times*, 21 April 2006.

'The price of silver appeared to be steady following the dramatic fall late last week. The precious metal suffered a near 14 per cent drop on 20 April. ... The price had doubled in the three months before the drop... .' *Antiques Trade Gazette*, 29 April 2006.

'Gold breaks past \$700 barrier', *Financial Times*, 10 May 2006. 'Gold broke through the \$700 a troy ounce level for the first time in 25 years'... 'record platinum prices and political tension over Iran's nuclear research plans... Gold reached a record of \$873 in January 1980 after the 1979 Iranian revolution cut oil exports...'.

'Antiques sold for scrap as silver price rockets'; silver reached a 26-year high and platinum an all-time high ... scrap value at £6.20 an ounce. Once again people were sending for melt 'post-1930s silver salvers and teaset, the kind of thing dealers are struggling to sell at over £5 an ounce... .' *Antiques Trade Gazette*, 20 May 2006.

'Copper fever sparks meltdown at the mint. Jewellers get jittery but gold fillings give dentists something to smile about.' *The Guardian*, 12 May 2006.

Fakes

The London Assay Office took the unusual step of issuing an advertisement this year, warning of fakes. Several pieces have appeared on the market, of recent manufacture, in the past few years. Readers are asked to be vigilant:

WARNING Fakes on the make

In recent months, items bearing forged marks have been submitted for auction by the same unidentified individual, at different locations outside London. The relevant Trading Standards authorities have been informed.

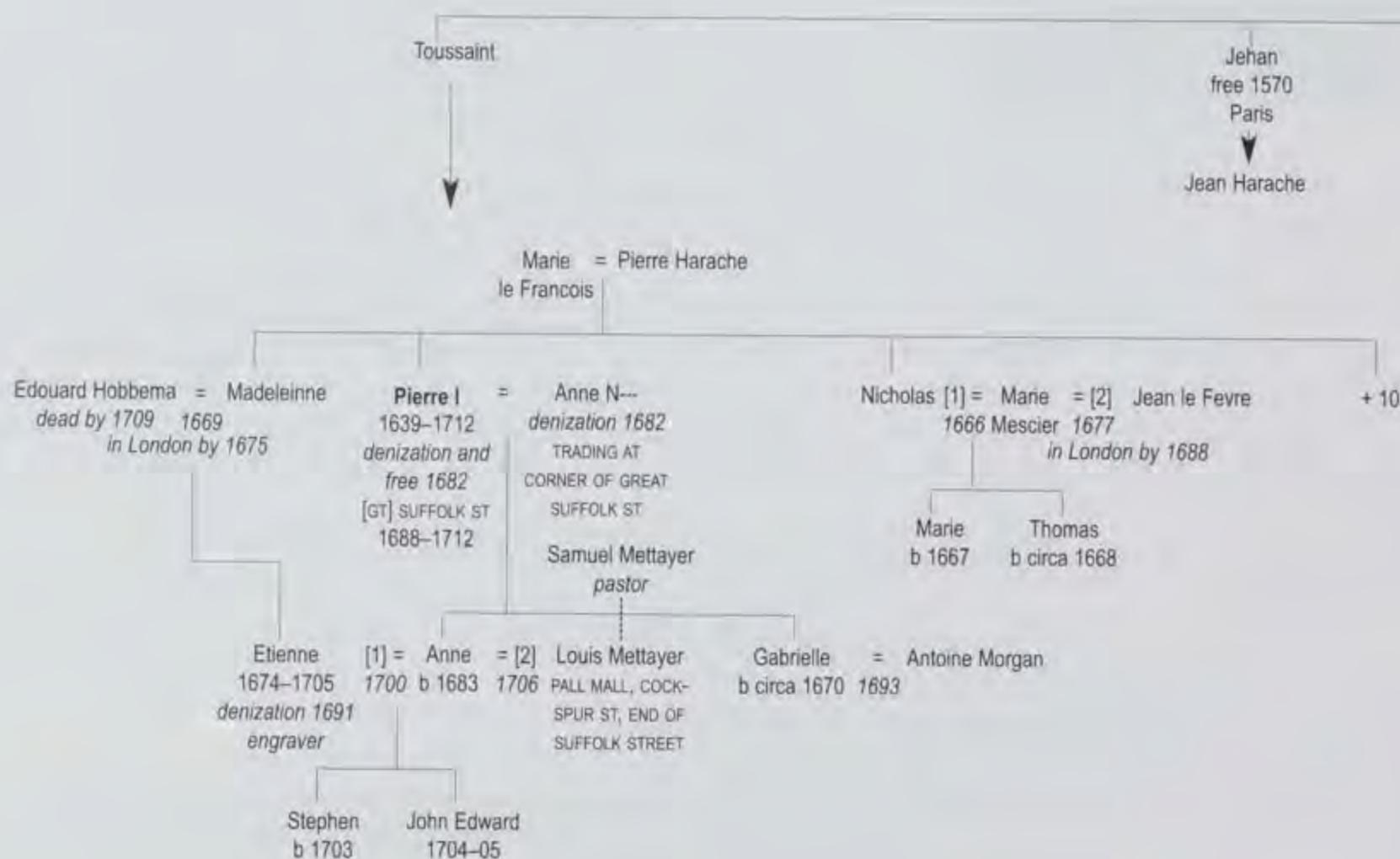
Extra caution should be exercised if you are offered any spoon or serving pieces for sale, unless the provenance is irrefutable. If you have any doubts, please submit the items to the Antique Plate Committee for examination.

The Harache family

It so happens that, despite the multitudinous topics available to the researcher, every so often two or more people hit upon the same subject at the same time. This has happened with the Harache family, whose lives have been pursued by no fewer than five people in recent years.

Denis Vatinel includes the family in his wider

researches into French protestants.¹ Brian Beet researched some of the Haraches for his work on foreign snuffbox makers in 2002.² Following Beet's death, three other men became aware that they were all chasing the same hare, but chose to continue their researches independently. There were both advantages and disadvantages to this course of action. Julian Cousins and Keith



1 Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français.

2 Brian Beet, 'Foreign snuffbox makers in eighteenth-century London', *The Silver Society Journal*, no14 2002. His early death brought to an end his promising researches.

3 Julian Cousins, 'Pierre Harache I and II', *Silver Studies, the Journal of the Silver Society*, no19 2005. Keith Le May, 'A fresh look at the Harache family of Goldsmiths', *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society*, XXVIII (3), 2005, p364. Cousins and Le May met, quite by acci-

dent, looking for the same information in the same library on the same day.

4 David McKinley has previously published 'AH crowned cinquefoil below and HA crowned cinquefoil below', *Silver Studies*, no16 2004, p77.

5 Arthur Grimwade, (*London Goldsmiths 1697-1837*) said that Ann Harache was the widow of Pierre I (who was also called Ann but whose surname has yet to be discovered); Cousins, in correspondence with Vatinel, that she was the sister of

Pierre II. LeMay and McKinley agree that she was in fact the daughter of Pierre I.

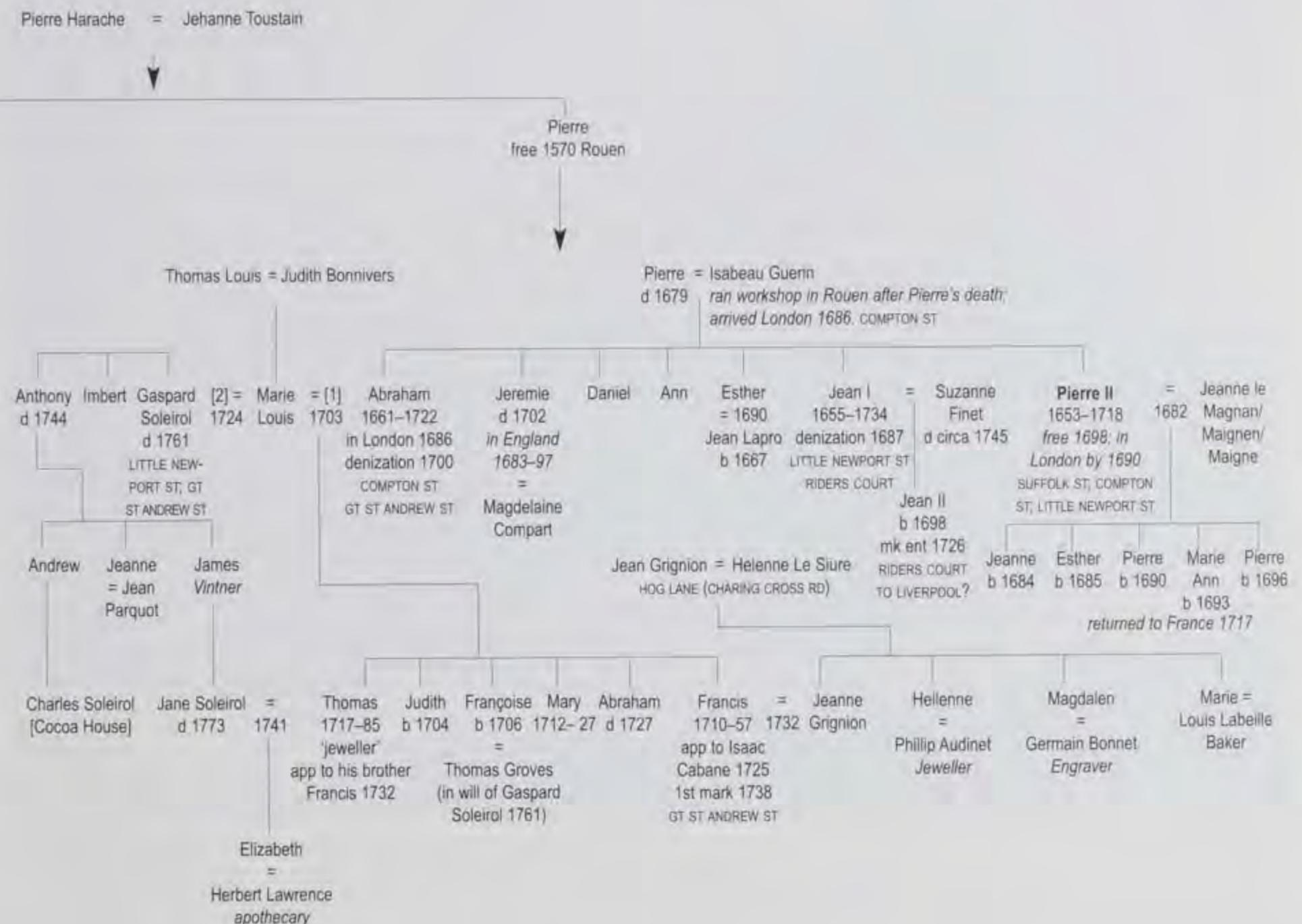
Le May published almost simultaneously in different journals in 2005.³ Cousins focused on the marks of Pierre I and II and the attributions of objects to each silversmith. Both Le May and now David McKinley⁴ have cast their net wider, in terms of genealogy, than Cousins, who had a different brief. Le May was first into print with an extensively researched paper (published by the Huguenot Society) and this has meant that we have felt unable to publish much of McKinley's work, on the grounds that readers who wish to follow up the Haraches might be overwhelmed by reading several similar, but slightly different, articles in different journals, in addition to the writing of Beet and Cousins. However, Cousins and Le May reached different conclu-

sions, most importantly over the Ann Harache who married Louis Mettayer (the latter has been found to be correct),⁵ and further research has modified some points in Beet's researches. It is important that a correction be published in this journal at the first opportunity.

We have reached, we hope, a happy compromise. There follows a table of the Harache family that incorporates the work of all five researchers, as presently understood. No doubt more information will emerge as the trio of English researchers pursue this most interesting family further.

We are extremely grateful to Keith Le May for the help and advice he has given.

VB



The Arms and Armour Society

ANTHONY DOVE

At first glance there may not seem to be much connection between silver and arms and armour. Perhaps the most obvious is that of silver-hilted European smallswords of the eighteenth century. My personal experience has been that such swords purchased at a specialist arms fair are generally more reasonably priced than those at a silver fair, as the dealers tend to regard them as blades that happen to have a silver hilt attached. Many years ago I managed to purchase a sword of circa 1710 which had a later blade but the hilt had a set of Britannia hallmarks.

There are also collectors of silver-mounted pistols and rifles, not to mention later presentation swords (ie those of the Lloyds Patriotic Fund). Where these latter are occasionally found in gold they sometimes have examples of the rare sun in splendour mark, which is found only on high quality items.

My initial collecting area was weapons, but for the last twenty-odd years I have had the dual interest also in silver. There are and have been a number of members with an interest in both silver and arms and armour. John Hayward, whose detailed knowledge of Huguenot silver was matched by his expertise on European arms and armour, was an acknowledged specialist in both subjects. Claude Blair, editor of *The History of Silver*, is an internationally recognised authority on arms and armour and a liveryman of the Goldsmiths' Company. The late Mrs G.E.P. How, although not an active member of the Arms and Armour Society, had a great interest in the subject, having a collection of medieval and seventeenth-century swords. Other names familiar to Silver Society members are the late Arthur Grimwade and Charles Oman, who also belonged to both societies, as do a number of current members. I therefore feel I am among illustrious company.

The *Journal*, in common with that of the Silver Society, publishes original papers; these have included research by Leslie Southwick, well known for his book on English silver-hilted swords. Over the years a number of articles have been written involving silver hallmarks on swords and firearms. One such is a detailed paper by Bernard Dickens on the attribution of the MB mark, comparing those of Michael Barnett and Moses Brent, which was published in the Society's *Journal* in March 1999, relating to the marks on silver-mounted firearms. A copy of this is available for consultation in the library of Goldsmiths' Hall.

Those interested in the actual making of wrought silver would realise that there are many similarities in manufacture. For example, a medieval helmet is raised from a block of iron in the same way as a silver coffee pot. Contemporary sixteenth-century woodcuts of armourers' workshops show that hammers and stakes used for embossing are almost identical to those used by silversmiths.

The subject of cutlery is another area where enthusiasts can benefit from membership of both societies, as a number of papers have been written on the marks of sword cutlers. We have had talks by Simon Moore and Bill Brown on this subject.

The Society, in addition to publishing two issues of its *Journal* a year, also sends out a quarterly newsletter to keep members informed of activities in its field. This latter enables queries to be raised and gives information regarding research being undertaken. Among its stated aims are the preservation of armour and weapons as well as encouraging the study of all aspects of the subject. This includes the support of its members, often in the face of legislation that is intended to prevent crime, but which effectively penalises collectors. The period covered in both *Journal* and talks ranges from earliest times to the twentieth century. Details of future meetings are given in the current newsletter which can be obtained free of charge from the Hon. Secretary. Anyone wishing to attend will be sent a guest card to allow admission to the Tower of London after normal opening hours. The Arms and Armour Society, in common with the Silver Society, has an international membership and welcomes new members, providing a forum for the exchange of ideas.

The current annual membership subscription is £15. Anyone wanting further details should contact the Hon. Secretary, at PO Box 10232, London SW19 2ZD.

The first in an occasional series on other societies of possible interest to silver collectors and other readers of this journal.

Times past

A child's memories of Harman & Co., 177 New Bond Street, London, 1914 – 1920



1 Lambert & Co., 10–12 Coventry Street, circa 1880. The photograph is annotated with the names of those shown (left to right):
B. Blackburn Senr, J.W.H. Powell, J. Mortimer Senr, J. Rabbits, George Lambert.
The firm was absorbed by Harman & Co. Ltd in 1916.

*By Lola Harman, born 1910,
daughter of Sydney B. Harman [1871–1920]*

When I was allowed to come to London with Daddy, I found Harman's almost too good for description, from the painted sign with an 'old silversmith', which hung above the jingling old-fashioned glass door, through a long, narrow, emporium crammed, floor to ceiling,

either side, with behind-glass gold and silver objects to that private inner windowless room where we lunched. There was a deep glass-topped central table, a sort of glorified counter, I suppose, [though my father wouldn't have had it called that], full of sparkling jewellery.

My father's first act on arriving with me was sending dear old Woolbarb for plovers' eggs, arranged in the prettiest of small green moss nests, for my lunch. There

was a patterned carpet, reddish, on the floor there, which left ample margins of glossy green linoleum, perfect for my brother and I, as we always did, to play farms; allowed to help ourselves from the cupboards, there were all sorts of silver animals including numerous cow creamers, so we must have made a lot of extra work for the small army of polishing porters - Woolbarb, who I called Rhubarb, Streep and Joe. But nobody appeared to object, and clients merely smiled indulgently when Daddy, as he always did, proudly indicated us sitting on the floor surrounded by silver. I remember also there being a free-standing, tower-like case on cabriole legs. Ugly in itself, its glass shelves were laden with miniature silver furniture that were not toys but collector's pieces - even I mustn't touch.

Woolbarb used to do all the cooking at Harman's and we would use some of the silver plates to eat off, making meals there a double treat. But my father never did justice to the meals, always with one ear cocked for the 'ping' of the door.

All the elderly staff bustled around non-stop, though I never saw old Kilsby, in his white surplus-like gown, so much as look up, so I thought he might as well have

been stuffed and do believe he was there just for the effect, with his blowlamp and odds and ends behind a dark-green curtain, repairing things. But his inattention was more than made up for by pretty, bubbly, red-headed little Miss O'Leary. That popular song 'When Irish Eyes Are Smiling' has always made me think of her; she'd dart from behind her desk directly when she heard us come in and we were often left in her charge.

It would have been about then, too, I was taken to visit the Crichtons, probably, though I'm not sure, the then Bond Street jewellers and silversmiths. At any rate, their daughter Billie had this remarkably fine dolls' house, so huge as to make mine a shoe box, with room after room magnificently furnished, down to a real water-flushing lavatory, with a seat to lift up and down and a chain to pull which worked, and in its surrounding garden even a pigeon-cote, with fantails perched about. All in all it was such a dream that for years and years I spoke of 'Billie Crichton's dolls' house'.

In the height of the War, in January, we went on holiday to Cornwall. I remember Atrid, one of Daddy's favourite porters from 177 coming to Paddington with a telescopic silver mug which he thought would prove



2 Harman & Lambert, 177 New Bond Street, circa 1930.

useful. I always wondered why, for it hardly seemed necessary to me when we had a huge heavy leather picnic case that I always admired. I think that it had been some nobleman's bad debt, for Daddy quite often accepted goods in lieu of debt, (that was how he got his best claret) and all its silver fittings were crested. At any rate, I always thought it magnificent for it all weighed a ton.

After the War, Daddy bought up Lamberts, which had been his father's whole life, and where Daddy and Evans were apprenticed. This was one of his proudest achievements and 177 became not merely Harman & Co., but Harman and Lambert. And he brought home all manner of memorabilia, including poor battered old Moggie, the battle-scarred black tom, and several iron-bound safes, which had once held plate, but were from then on used to store pig and chicken food. There were also a Regulator long-case clock and a long refectory table, where the Lambert's staff had sat to eat their meals, which we used at home for our lessons.

For all that my father was – though he'd not appreciate me for saying it – only a glorified species of tradesman, he and his firm enjoyed an unusually warm association with Buckingham Palace. So it wasn't unusual

for him, and after my father's death the manager Evans, to be summoned there, and on arrival actually admitted to the royal bathroom when King George was in his tub. My father and Queen Mary undoubtedly established quite a rapport over the years and she, when at Harman's, would retire with him to the sanctum and discuss, over a cigarette, whatever transaction involved. In those strictly formal days, when royalty visited all staff not actually concerned were expected to stand outside premises on the pavement, whatever the weather, the entire time royal patrons were within; which is how Mummy recognised the Queen's presence, when she and I reached 177, shortly after Daddy died. Mummy being Mummy, scarcely less imperious than her Majesty, sent word in to inform her we were outside – whereupon we were admitted to the presence of a Gracious Consort, and a nervous, blushing Princess Mary, and spoken to with great kindness.

Extracted from family papers by Peter Cameron, the author's son.



Sydney Bellamy Harman, 1871–1920

Son of Walter John Harman. Educ. City of London School. In January 1886 apprenticed to George Lambert of 10, 11, 12 Coventry Street, London [for Lambert's see Culme vol II, pp281–82]. Allegedly thrown out of his father's house for saying 'damn' and at the same time left Lambert's without completing his apprenticeship. By 1891 he was working for Charles Johnston Hill [Catchpole & Williams] of 510 Oxford Street as a 'jeweller's assistant'; subsequently he spent some time working at Arthur & Co. of 36 New Bond Street, before setting up on his own account. In May 1898 formed a partnership with Charles Weld-Blundell of Ince-Blundell Hall, Lancs, as 'Harman & Co Ltd' and took over the shop at 177 New Bond Street from the Crown Perfumery Co. In October 1899 entered a mark with the London Assay Office [Culme 12952]. Charles Weld-Blundell, who had only debenture shares in the business, proved a difficult partner and eventually withdrew from the company. In 1915 acquired the freehold of the building in New Bond Street. In 1916 acquired the stock, name, fixtures and fittings of Lambert's. After his death in 1920, his widow Jean Shannon Harman, entered her own marks at the London Assay Office [November 1922, October 1926, and February 1935]. The firm was managed after S.B. Harman's death by William Evans, who had been employed at Lambert's in Coventry Street.

Peter Cameron

Percival COPYRIGHT Electric Light Studios
88 Edgware Road.

3 Sydney Bellamy Harman, circa 1898, at the time he set up his own company.



The Padgett & Braham archive



Towards the end of 2005, through David Beasley of Goldsmiths' Hall, the Metalwork Department of the Victoria and Albert Museum was put in touch with John Padgett, whose firm Padgett & Braham had closed a few years previously. He asked if the Museum would be interested in the remaining contents of the workshops. As the firm's predecessors went back via Edward Barnard & Sons and Chawner & Emes to Anthony Nelme, and recent amalgamations had incorporated important names such as Wakely & Wheeler, there could be little doubt that the Museum was very interested indeed. Following the loss of an important part of Comyns' archive to the Far East and C.J. Vander's sale,

also abroad, the Barnard's archive was the last chance to acquire the surviving archive of a major nineteenth-century firm. A further incentive was that the Museum already held some 250 items from the manufacturers, such as design books, ledgers and over 2,000 photographs covering the period 1805-1961.

Negotiations went on for some months as difficulties arose because of the Museum's critical shortage of storage space for archive material. John Padgett generously offered to give the Museum what they could take and the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths generously funded the packing and move. The Museum initially looked for space to save the archive as a complete entity





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but as it was not forthcoming a decision to save the greater part of the material had to be taken. Against a backdrop of some telephone calls of concern from interested members of the Society as word spread of what was happening, the task of recording, selecting and removal began in May 2006 and was completed in a matter of days. The V&A has been able to save the whole of the paper designs, a large part of the remaining business archive and some 60–70% of the remaining metal and composition models as well as some rubber moulds for both the firm of Edward Barnard and Wakely & Wheeler. Craftsmen who, on losing their jobs when the firm closed down were allowed to take equip-

ment that would help them continue to work, had already removed many tools and patterns, for example spoon moulds, as few were found.

The Barnard's pattern room, on the first floor of the building in Shacklewell Lane, contained fittings that had been brought from the previous workshops in Hatton Garden. The Museum has saved two of these cases with complete contents as an example of the storage of the metal patterns. On the second floor, the domain of Wakely & Wheeler, were further drawers of metal and paper designs. Ann Eatwell of the Metalwork Department and Christopher Marsden, Senior Archivist, had the difficult task of deciding what the Museum





could accommodate and then making the selection. There appear to be no metal patterns before about 1860, the majority date from 1860 to 1930. Quite a good number are dated. The selection focused on figures (the firm specialised in presentation, sporting and military markets particularly at the time of the Boer and First World Wars) and animal models with a representative sample of handles, spouts, wires and decorative details being saved. As much as possible was photographed: 'room views' and every drawer and many boxes, although only a selection of their contents could be photographed in detail in the time available, and no attempt was made to photograph the designs on paper, because the whole

group was to be kept. However, these include a few early nineteenth-century drawings of tureens and hundreds of twentieth-century drawings for firms such as Garrard's. Late nineteenth-century photograph albums, some early nineteenth-century pattern books and numerous printed catalogues and ledgers have also gone to the V&A.

The Museum is now seeking funds to catalogue the archive and is applying to the Arts and Humanities Research Council for further funding to enable two PhD students to research the Barnard, Wakeley and Wheeler and related silversmiths archive material.

Vanessa Brett





See p143



The Padgett & Braham archive, p14.





Enamelled and parcel-gilt service, David Altenstetter, Augsburg, 1615–17.

Sales by auction, p136.



Dessert service, Thomas Germain, Paris 1744.

Sales by auction, p136.



Interior of a silversmith's shop in Norwich, by Charles Catton, circa 1780. (Norwich Castle Museum)



The remaining pieces of the service commissioned to celebrate the return to health of George III, retailed by Wakelin & Tayler, London 1788–90. (The Royal Collection © 2006, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II)

The royal and aristocratic patronage of Wakelin & Tayler, p87.



Torah crown, Gerald Benney, London 1996, parcel-gilt and enamel. Height: 24cm (9½in). (Victoria and Albert Museum, private collection)



Kiddush cup, Tamar de Vries Winter, silver, enamel and gold foil, 2005. Height: 9cm (3½in). (Victoria and Albert Museum M.19-2005)

Contemporary Judaica made in Britain and America, p127.



*Opposite:
Simone ten Hompel, 'Possé', 12 beakers, 2004.*

*Left:
David Clarke, 'You Bermondsey Beauty'.*

New work, p122.





The Marine Service from the Royal Collection, London 1743–45 and circa. (The Royal Collection © 2006, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II)

Crespin or Sprimont? A question revisited, p25.

Crespin or Sprimont? A question revisited

KATHRYN JONES AND CHRISTOPHER GARIBALDI

The Neptune centrepiece in the Royal Collection, which bears the maker's mark of Paul Crespin and the date letter for London 1741/42, has been described as 'the purest rococo creation in English silver'.¹[fig 3 & p24] An inspired piece of rococo marine fantasy, it has been the subject of speculation since John Hayward first suggested in 1954 that although bearing Crespin's mark, it might in fact be the work of his friend and associate, the Liègeois goldsmith Nicholas Sprimont.² This argument was partly based on what was perceived as the continental character of the work.

In 1997 a close inspection of the object revealed the existence of a previously unrecorded set of Italian hallmarks. These indicate that the history of the piece is much more complicated and uncertain than had previously been suspected. Subsequent research into the construction and provenance of the centrepiece, whilst not definitively answering the questions raised by this discovery, has nevertheless produced some intriguing possibilities concerning its origins.



1 Detail of fig 11, from a set of four sauceboats in the Marine Service, Nicholas Sprimont, London 1743–45.

(Unless otherwise stated, all images are The Royal Collection © 2006, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II)

The centrepiece forms part of the Marine Service, which was almost certainly supplied to Frederick, Prince of Wales in the early 1740s. Unfortunately no record exists of the constituent parts of the service in the Duchy of Cornwall account books, nor in the ledgers of George Wickes, goldsmith to the Prince – a lacuna which adds considerably to the debate about the commission. The date of the centrepiece fits into the period when Frederick had at last been reconciled with his father and granted a greater allowance by Parliament.³

It is first recorded in an undated document, listed as being in George III's collection⁴ and the service was certainly at Windsor in 1801 as it was referred to in the Lord Chamberlain's Accounts, firmly described as 'his Majesty's service'. The association of the service with Frederick dates from the inventory of royal plate made in 1832, for William IV.

The Warrant Book entry for 27 May 1801 describes the service being delivered to a 'Mr. Williams' from Windsor;⁵ the centrepiece

1 A. Grimwade, *Rococo Silver 1727–1765*, London 1974, p30 (hereafter Grimwade).

2 J. Hayward in *Catalogue of an Exhibition of Royal Plate from Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle*, exhib cat, Victoria and Albert Museum, London 1954, no39.

3 The general election of 1741 saw Frederick as the focus for opposition against Walpole, and George II realised the polit-

ical need to bring about reconciliation with his son. Parliament granted an extra £50,000 per annum to the Prince of Wales as a result of this reconciliation, thereby doubling Frederick's income.

4 Royal Archives, Windsor, GEO/16328.

5 TNA, PRO, LC5/206. We are grateful to Ellenor Alcorn for drawing our attention to these documents.



2 Copy of the centrepiece, James Young, London 1780/81, made for the 4th Duke of Rutland. This version includes a copy of the later stand, by Rundell & Bridge, which does not feature in another copy, shown in fig 10. (Taken from Sir Charles Jackson, *History of English Plate*, 1911)

can be identified from the description of the cover 'with Neptune and his Trident'. There is also an entry in the main part of the volume for 28 May 1801: 'Mr Gilbert/to gild a silver epergne in 34 pieces', and the Jewel Office bills record the same process in language which seems to indicate that this was the first time the service had been gilded:⁶

Furnished by order of the Ld. Chamberlain for his Majesty's service by Philip Gilbert 10 Oct. 1801

repairing a silver epergne with 4 branches	
for gilding	4 -4 -0
gilding do wt. 577 oz @ 5/pr oz	158-13 -0
preparing silver sauceboats & stands	
for gilding	1-14 -0
glass linings	1-16 -0
4 ladles for do	-4 -0
Preparing 4 shells for pickles	-12 -0
Preparing 4 shells for pickles [crossed out]	
preparing 4 salt cellars and ladles for gilding	-16 -0
gilding the whole over wt 550 oz @ 5/p	151 -5 -0
a mahogany case for gilt epergne	6-16 -0

Epergnes and centrepieces steadily grew in fashion from the mid-1730s; George Wickes, for example, supplied over 30 epergnes between 1735 and 1745. These objects were ideally suited to rococo ornament, often with a marine theme. The Spanish Marquess de la Enseñada owned a table centre supplied by Ballin in the 1720s, representing Neptune in a mussel shell rocking on the ocean waves.⁷ Soups at this period, particularly for more lavish dinners, were often made with a shellfish base and served *à la française*, so that the tureen and accompanying dishes remained on the table throughout the meal. Frederick's household accounts show that his diet included a large quantity of fish, including turbot, sole, cod, salmon, trout, pike, carp and flounders, as well as lobsters and shrimp. Oysters were one of the Prince's favourites and were ordered locally by the barrel. They were included in many dishes as well as being eaten on their own.⁸

It has been shown that it would be incorrect to describe the Prince of Wales's sophisticated taste as purely or consistently rococo, but Frederick was clearly influential in the spread of *le genre pittoresque* in England.⁹ His garden at Carlton House, for example, was described in 1734 by Sir Thomas Robinson as having 'the appearance of beautiful nature, ... and is according to what one hears of the Chinese, entirely after their models for works of this nature, where they never plant straight lines or make regular designs'.¹⁰

The account books of Charles Calvert, 5th Baron Baltimore (1699–1751) may explain why the commission for the service went to Crespin and Sprimont rather than George Wickes. Baltimore was a close friend of Frederick, Prince of Wales and was the Prince's Gentleman of the Bedchamber between 1731 and 1747. He was an enthusiastic collector of art and one of the leading proponents of the rococo in England. The interiors of his Surrey residence, Woodcote Park, displayed some of the most advanced French rococo taste of any house in England.¹¹ More importantly, Baltimore clearly exercised a good deal of influence over the Prince's own collecting habits and commissions. He was instrumental, for example, in the design of Frederick's new barge, which was commissioned in 1732, and oversaw the work as it was completed.¹² In 1755 Baltimore went to Paris on Frederick's behalf to purchase works of art and

6 TNA, PRO, LC9/350; 116v. The tureen when taken apart reveals an ungolded surface on the portion of its underside which is normally hidden by its shell mount. It would be interesting to know which repairs might have been carried out at this time.

7 G. Mabile, 'Germain, Durand, Auguste: French Goldsmith Art in Europe during the Age of Enlightenment', in *En Konges Taffel*, exhib cat, Amalienborg Palace, Copenhagen 1988, p247. See also Paul Micío, 'Early French surtouts', *Silver Studies*, no19 2005, for earlier French centrepieces.

8 Duchy of Cornwall Archives, London, Household Accounts of Frederick, Prince of Wales, vol VII, f218. In France, the dolphin was associated through a play on words with the heir to the throne,

the 'Dauphin', and this may also have a bearing on the marine theme of the centrepiece (see Micío, as note 7, p90).

9 K. Rorschach, *Frederick, Prince of Wales (1707–1751) as a patron of the visual arts: Princely patriotism and political propaganda*, doctoral thesis, Yale University 1985.

10 Letter from Sir Thomas Robinson to his father-in-law, the 3rd Earl of Carlisle: Historical MSS Commission, 15th Report, Appendix 6, pp143–44.

11 A surviving room from Woodcote Park is now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

12 For the launch of the barge, see *Read's Weekly Journal*, 15 July 1732 '...they went on board the Prince of Wales's fine Barge, lately built under the direction of Lord Baltimore...'

thereby furnish the Prince's residences before his marriage. Clearly Frederick trusted Baltimore's judgement and in his will he recommended to his son George (the future George III), that he 'regard the opinions and advice of the Earl of Carlisle, the Earl of Hartington, Lord Baltimore...'.¹³ Baltimore's taste was far more consistently rococo than the Prince of Wales's.¹⁴ His account books record payments to several craftsmen associated with Frederick, including the carver Paul Petit, who worked on the Prince's barge and on picture frames. More significantly, the account books contain two payments made directly to Paul Crespin and Nicholas Sprimont. Crespin received £89 3s on 7 April 1743, whilst Sprimont was paid £149 17s on 6 January 1744. No silver associated with either goldsmith is known to survive from Baltimore's collections, and it is tempting to believe that he was purchasing on behalf of the Prince of Wales.¹⁵

The centrepiece

We begin with a summary of the discussion that follows. It seems that the centrepiece was developed in stages:

1. A tureen of circa 1720, in Régence taste, completely unmarked but possibly French or Italian. At some point the sleeve on the body of the tureen that bears Turin marks, and some unmarked pieces (eg swags), were added, but it is unclear when or where this was done.
2. The tureen was transformed into a centrepiece, by the addition of a plateau marked by Paul Crespin, 1741/42. Various other unmarked parts were added at this point (eg dolphins). (This could have been a simultaneous action with the addition of the sleeve above.)
3. In 1826/27 it was given an additional base by Rundell & Bridge, each part of which is marked. It is probable that the entire object was re-gilt at this time; the Royal arms in the form used between 1816 and 1837 were added to the Crespin base.

The reader should also bear in mind that:

- The centrepiece is an integral part of the Marine service, other pieces of which either have the mark of Nicholas Sprimont 1743–45 or are unmarked.
- The centrepiece as then constituted was copied by James Young in 1780/81 [fig 2] and again in 1786/87.¹⁶[fig 10] The existence of these copies establishes that it is not an historicist confection by a firm such as Rundell's.
- The construction is unusual: the parts are bolted together with numerous screws, rather than soldered.

The centrepiece was listed in 1834 as having 34 pieces (excluding the Rundell's additions). These are marked on fig 3.2 as A–Q. The missing item may have been a liner for the tureen.

The design

The demands of creating such an elaborate object, as well as the need to disassemble it for periodic cleaning, would have made a structure of numerous elements unavoidable. However, a coherent original design would surely have resolved some of its structural problems. In comparison, another elaborate centrepiece now in the Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio, also bearing the mark of Paul Crespin and made in 1740/41 probably for Charles, 6th Duke of Somerset (1662–1748), separates into only four parts.¹⁷ Similarly, the Ashburnham centrepiece, Nicholas Sprimont 1747/48, comprises

¹³ Royal Archives, Windsor, GEO/54070 for a draft of Frederick, Prince of Wales's will (undated).

¹⁴ As Kimberly Rorschach has pointed out, it seems that he was far more instrumental in acquiring works of art imported directly from the continent than has been previously been realised. K. Rorschach, 'The 5th Lord Baltimore as patron and collector', *Apollo*, January 1995.

¹⁵ Elaine Barr has put forward the theory that the payment to Sprimont in 1744 might be for the four sauceboats, stands and ladles of the Marine Service but this ignores the payment made to Crespin in the previous year. See 'The French Heritage', *Royal French Silver*, The Property of George Ortiz, Sotheby's New York, 13 November 1996, pp90–97 (hereafter Barr 1996). Equally tempting is a theory that the service was a gift to Frederick, in gratitude for Baltimore's promotion to a Lordship of the Admiralty in 1742 – particularly in the light of the decorative motifs.

¹⁶ The 1780/81 copy, by James Young, together with copies of the other dishes in the service by Robert Hennell I, was made for Charles Manners, 4th Duke of Rutland. The accompanying dishes seem to have been cast from the original patterns rather than from castings taken from the original dishes as they have been assembled at slightly different angles. The Rutland service was sold at Christie's London, 16 January 1944 lots 44–47

(incorrectly dated 1820/21). Unfortunately the present whereabouts of the tureen is unknown which precludes comparison. This is also true of a second copy, James Young 1786/87, probably for John Fitzgibbon, created Viscount Fitzgibbon and Earl of Clare in 1795. The Rutland copy had a similar Rundell's base supplied, presumably some time after that created for the Royal Collection. It is also interesting to compare the base supplied by Rundell's with the centrepiece by Patuogno, (see note 29 below, no12, pl 11). It is particularly striking in that the Italian piece sits on a triangular plateau supported on three double hippocamp legs highly reminiscent of the stand by Rundell's.

¹⁷ The body of the Toledo tureen was cast in a number of sections using the lost-wax method. These sections were then assembled and soldered together to create a single element. The expertise required was developed by French silversmiths such as Thomas Germain (1673–1748) in Paris over the preceding fifteen years. This knowledge had been transferred to England and disseminated through a variety of routes including the contacts between the Royal Society in London and the *Société des arts de Paris* of which Thomas Germain was a member. U. Vitali, 'Beyond the secret traditions: the evolution of styles and techniques in the art of the goldsmith', *The Silver Society Journal*, no12 2000.



3.1 (above) *The Neptune centrepiece. The various parts are largely unmarked, but it bears marks of Paul Crespin, London 1741/42 and Turin, circa 1720–42. Width 68cm (26¾in). See also colour illustration, p24*

3.2 (right) *The 34 constituent parts of the centrepiece, which are listed in the 1834 inventory, including the 1826/27 base.*

ten different pieces.¹⁸ In contrast, the tureen section alone from the Neptune centrepiece is made of six detachable elements; its body has been raised from a flat sheet of metal into the round rather than cast. The centrepiece lacks the holistic sculptural integrity that might have been achieved through the adoption of the latest lost-wax casting technology and falls short of the harmony of scale and style that is seen in the rest of the Service – the four salts and spoons, [fig 14] and the four sauceboats with stands and ladles, [fig 11] all hallmarked by Sprimont between 1742 and 1745.

Fig 3.1 and colour p24 shows the centrepiece as presently constituted. It is made of an unusually large number of pieces and our present thinking about this complex object is best explained by showing its possible development in stages, where the positioning of maker's marks is indicated.

Attention has been drawn to the similarities in design between the central tureen section of the Neptune centrepiece and the modelling of an earlier pair of silver-gilt wine coolers made for the 3rd Duke of Marlborough, also by Crespin and dated 1733/34.¹⁹[fig 4]

18 Victoria and Albert Museum (M.46:1, 2-1971).

19 T. Murdoch, 'Harpies and Hunting Scenes, Paul Crespin (1694–1770), Huguenot Goldsmith', *Country Life*, 29 August 1985, pp556–58; the supporters themselves in fact more closely resemble those seen in a design of 1723 for a silver wine cooler for the Duc de Bourbon by Meissonnier (Victoria

and Albert Museum, E.196-1967). For a detailed survey of Meissonnier's casting techniques see U. Vitali, 'Meissonnier's Goldsmith Persona: A sublimation of forms and techniques, Natura ed Incenzione', in *The Thyssen Meissonnier Silver Tureen made for the 2nd Duke of Kingston*, Sotheby's New York, 13 May 1998, pp70–87.

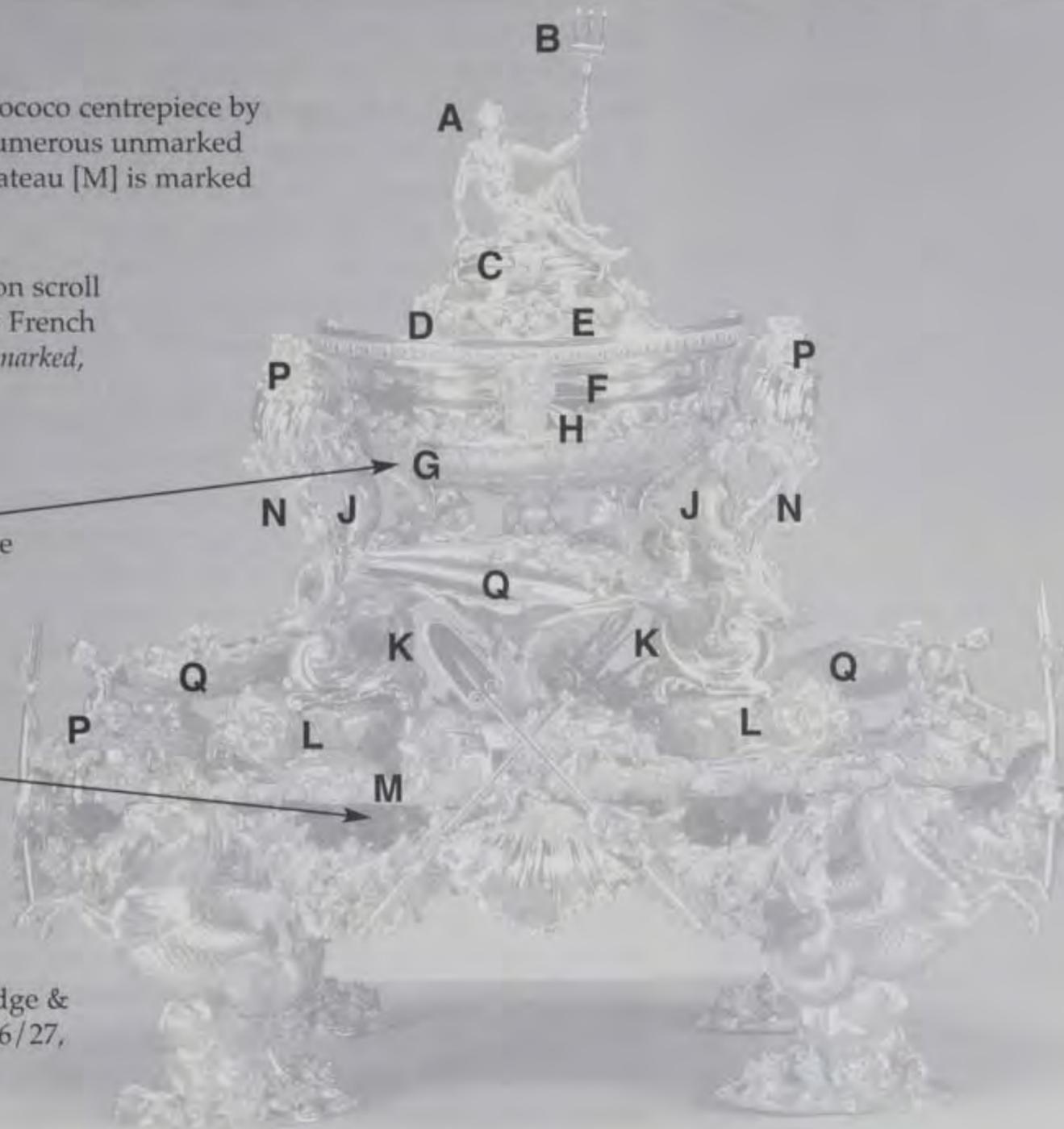
Conversion to a rococo centrepiece by the addition of numerous unmarked parts; only the plateau [M] is marked

Plain tureen on scroll legs, possibly French or Italian, *unmarked*, circa 1720

Turin mark on shell sleeve

Crespin mark

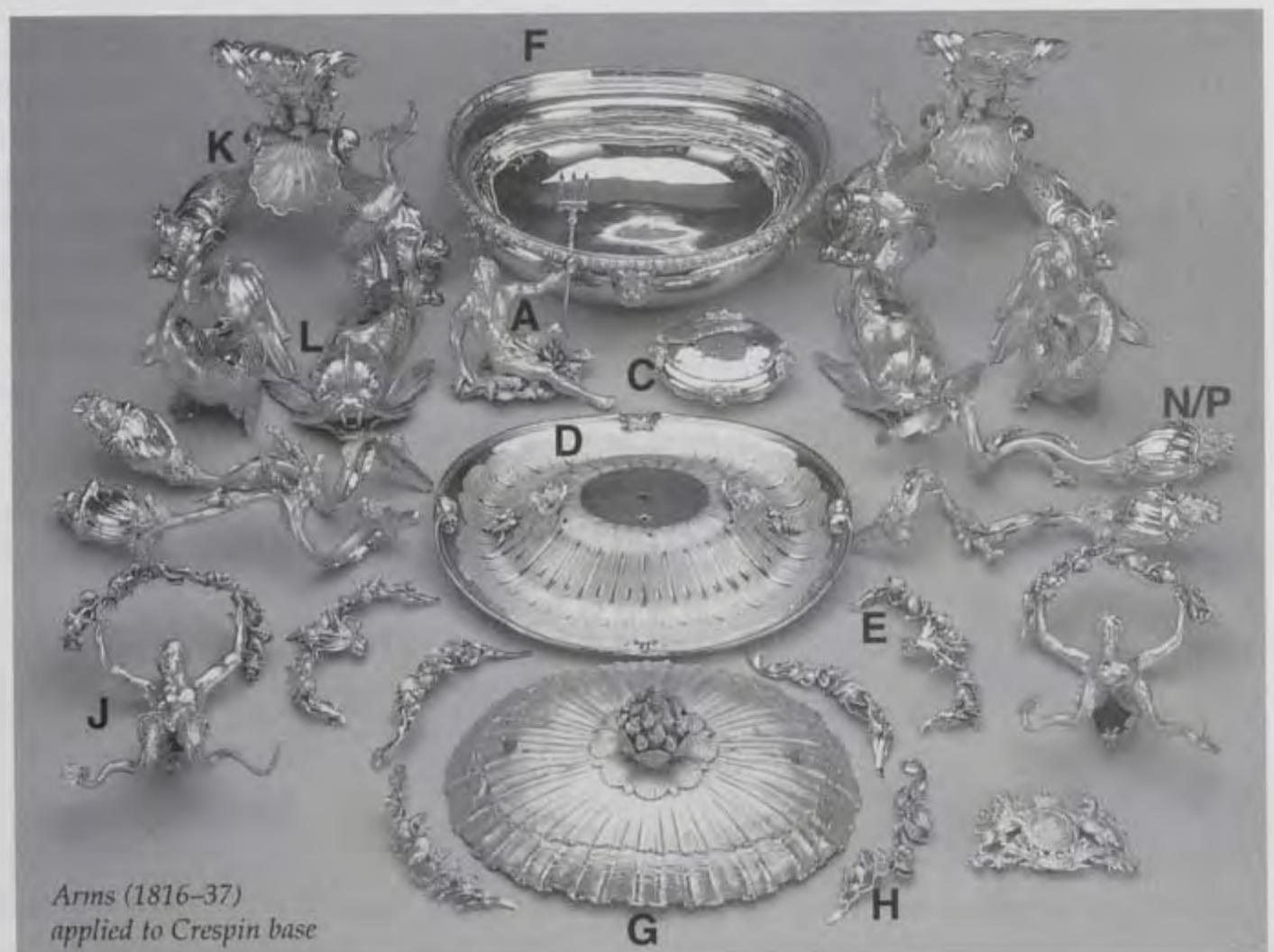
Rundell, Bridge & Rundell, 1826/27, *fully marked*



- A Neptune
- B His trident
- C Oval base for Neptune
- D Tureen cover
- E 2 swags of rococo decoration on cover
- F Tureen body
- G Shell, marked for Turin
- H 4 swags of rococo decoration
- J 2 figures
- K 2 legs
- L 4 dolphins
- M Plateau base, with Crespin's mark, 1741/42
- N 4 candle branches
- P 4 covers for these branches
- Q 4 dishes

Missing: tureen liner

Added: armorials



Arms (1816-37)
applied to Crespin base



4 Wine cooler, Paul Crespin, London 1733/34, silver-gilt, made for the 3rd Duke of Marlborough. (By kind permission of the Trustees of the Marlborough Chattels Settlement)



5 Detail of the shell grip, applied with a merman and floral swag.

The handles of the latter, in the form of satyrs or fauns, recall the supporters of the tureen, in the form of a merman and a nereid with bifurcated fish tails.[fig 5] Above the head of each is a small shell handle similar to those on which the feet of the Marlborough satyrs rest. In addition, both objects are of a Régence form on which rococo elements, such as the swags suspended from mask heads and the shell ornament around the base, have been overlaid. However, in the case of the Marlborough wine coolers, the cast handles are soldered to the body of the piece and cannot be removed, and the shell and swags are integral to the casting of the body of the wine cooler. In contrast to both the Toledo tureen of 1740/41 and the even earlier Marlborough wine coolers of 1733/34, in the Neptune centre-piece of 1741/42 these elements are fully detachable (with the exception of the small shell handles), which seems perversely old-fashioned. The reason for this becomes apparent when the centre-piece is taken apart, revealing quite clearly that a relatively plain tureen and cover has had screwed onto it a riot of unmarked rococo elements and, on the underside of the body, a sheet (marked Turin) decorated as a shell.

The Turin element

The removable shallow chased shell element is of particular significance: its rim is pierced by a number of holes which in no way relate to the present form or structure of the tureen and which are normally disguised by swags of shells, coral and seaweed that are bolted around it.[figs 3.2G & 7] The shell bears a set of previously unsuspected hallmarks, which are normally hidden beneath the bracket of one of the pair of double scroll legs on which the whole tureen stands. Although neither mark is completely clear, partly due to having been punched on the ribbed surface of the shell, one is certainly the city mark for Turin.²⁰[fig 6] It is possible, though not certain, that what can be faintly seen on either side of the shield here are the letters GD, which may be the initials of Giovanni Damodè, who was assay-master in Turin 1733–53.²¹ The absence of many known examples of the various Turinese assay-masters' marks precludes at this stage a definitive attribution, which would help to narrow the production date of the shell; sadly, the shell is missing its required counter assay mark which would have helped this process considerably by providing three sets of active dates. The second mark on the shell fragment is somewhat clearer and is that attributed to Andrea Boucheron (1701–61), who became a master goldsmith some time between 1720 and 1725, and was appointed goldsmith to the court of Savoy in 1737.²² In the absence of any other evidence, we can therefore say that the shell element was made by



6 Marks on the shell element, left: Turin; right: Andrea Boucheron.



7 The shell, bearing the above marks. Shown as 'G' in fig 3.2.

Boucheron in Turin at some point between 1720 and its incorporation into the Neptune centrepiece before the end of May 1742 (the latest point at which the date letter 'f' for 1741/42 could have been applied) although stylistically it is unlikely to have been made before 1725. As such it appears to be the earliest example of Boucheron's limited surviving work (the earliest otherwise being a monstrance from the Abbey of St Benigno Canavese of around 1750).²³

Boucheron supplied an enormous quantity of both elaborate and simple domestic silver, including a number of tureens and centrepieces, to the royal household in Turin from 1730 until 1760 at an extraordinarily high cost of more than 238,000 Piedmontese lire.²⁴ An idea of the quality and artistic ambition of Boucheron's work can be gleaned from a portrait of the goldsmith of 1750.²⁵ It shows Boucheron as a well-to-do man of fashion, underlining his status as court goldsmith by the inclusion of a sheet of paper at the lower left of the portrait which is inscribed '[Ca]rlo Emanuele'. Behind him on shelves are shown a number of pieces of exuberantly rococo silver based on designs by Pierre Germain published in Paris in 1748.²⁶ The piece in the top left-hand corner is a mustard pot enfolded in shell-like ornament particularly reminiscent of the striated quality of the shell element under consideration.²⁷

In the absence of any other hallmarks it is impossible to say at the moment which other elements of the centrepiece may also have come from Turin.²⁸ Spectrographic analysis might solve this problem, but has not yet been carried out. But is it possible to show which elements of the centrepiece enjoyed a separate existence before being incorporated into the present structure?

The figure of Neptune with trident in the pose of a Roman river god is stylistically reminiscent of a number of surviving Italian pieces.²⁹ The base of the figure is slightly too large for the boss on which it sits [3.2C], suggesting at the very least that it represents a marriage between two pre-existing elements. The cover of the tureen [3.2D] when viewed in detail reveals evidence of adaptation. There are several points at which earlier ornament has been filed away and, as with the piercing on the rim of the shell, this has been disguised by the arrangement of the loosely bolted swags [3.2E]. It seems peculiar that in a piece of such importance, destined for a royal patron, greater efforts were not made to obliterate such obvious evidence of recycling. Perhaps an element of speed was involved and the centrepiece was something of a rush order, but this explanation is not wholly convincing.

The S-scroll legs [3.2K] appear at odds stylistically with the dolphin supports which now entwine them; [3.2L] if the dolphins are removed, it is possible to see an earlier incarnation of these legs. The dolphins literally encircle the S-scroll legs; the former were clearly made to fit around the latter, having a roughly cast channel to accommodate the leg, through which none of the decorative scaling detail of the dolphin is carried. In contrast, the guilloche-like pattern of the legs is continuous and uninterrupted, strongly suggesting that they were pre-existing elements. It would be interesting to compare the 1780s copies to see if a different structural solution was found. One of the brackets on the royal collection centrepiece has a particularly bad break which has been mended by soldering, showing the vulnerability of the legs.[fig 8] Was this the motivation for creating the dolphin supports? It seems unlikely that such a break



8 Reverse of one of the pairs of legs (fig 3.2K), showing historic break and solder.

20 Since 1678 the mark had taken the form of the crowned royal arms of Savoy (a plain cross in a shield) usually flanked by the initials of the Turinese assay-master. See A. Bargoni, *Mastri orafi e argentieri in Piemonte dal XVII al XIX secolo*, Turin 1976, pp6-8.

21 Bargoni (as note 20), p25. Damodè's assay mark from the 1750s is found clearly on an inkstand in the Metropolitan Museum, New York and differs in several respects from that found on the shell, which is rounder in form and less clearly defined. It may be that it represents an earlier form of Damodè's assay mark but it may equally be the mark of a number of other assay-masters including his predecessor Gaspare De Riva, first cited in relation to the assay in a document of 1716. The mark could also be the assay mark for Orazio Michele De Riva, cited as an assay-master in 1734 but known to be working as early as 1692 or of his son Carlo Antonio De Riva who started as an assay-master in 1733; less likely but still possible given the dates involved is (Carlo) Giuseppe Deriva first mentioned in relation to the assay in 1741.

For Boucheron's inkstand (circa 1753) see C. Le Corbeiller, 'A Tale of Two Cities', *Cleveland Studies in the History of Art*, vol 8, 2003, p149, fig 3 in which she discusses a number of interesting issues relating to the relationship between the goldsmiths of Turin and Paris during this period.

22 Recent research by Gianfranco Fina has convincingly re-attributed the mark to Boucheron; he argues that it represents the monogram 'VA' for Vittorio Amadeo II (1666-1732), the first King of the newly combined Kingdom of Sardinia, in whose reign Boucheron became a master goldsmith some time between 1720 and 1725. G. Fina, *Maestri argentieri ed argentieri alla corte di Carlo Emanuele III e Vittorio Amedeo III 1730-1796*, Turin 1997, p22 (hereafter Fina).

23 Fina, p22 and pl 1.

24 Fina, p18.

25 Musei Civici di Torino. Unknown artist, Turin 1750; oil on canvas. Illustrated in Le Corbeiller (as note 21).

26 Pierre Germain, *Eléments de l'orfèvrerie*, Paris 1748.

27 Le Corbeiller (as note 21), pl 5.

28 The standard for Turinese silver established by the 1678 decree of the Regent Maria-Giovanna Battista was set at 916.667 parts per thousand. This was raised to 944.445 in 1679 before returning to 916.667 from 1713 to 1803 (in exceptional cases a standard of 750 or even 500 parts per thousand was allowed); Bargoni (as note 20), p6.

29 See *Tre secoli di argenti napoletani*, exhib cat, Castel Sant'Elmo, Naples, 1988, nos 13-14: two centrepieces with figures of Neptune by Michele Patuogno (active 1704-21).



9 Stripped of later rococo embellishments, the heart of the centrepiece is a tureen on high legs which would once have been screwed to a base, possibly French or Italian, circa 1720–30.

could have occurred once the dolphins were in place. If the Boucheron shell mount is removed, together with all the other extraneous elements such as swags and supporting figures, the curved brackets of the S-scroll legs fit comfortably against the underside of the tureen. The legs must originally have been screwed to a plateau for stability.

The tureen and its legs in this naked state have a similar Régence feel to the boss on top of the cover, once the slightly oversize figure of Neptune is removed.³⁰[fig 9] The tall, if not ungainly, proportions of the tureen and its legs do not appear so incongruous when compared with numerous designs, including a design for an epergne by Andrea Valadier of the late 1730s,³¹ a design for a tea-kettle by Pierre Germain³² or indeed to an extant centrepiece marked by Crespin and dated 1742/43.³³ Whilst it would be foolish on present evidence to be definitive about the existence of a pre-existing core tureen in the Régence style and even more foolhardy to attempt to ascribe either a nationality or a hand at work, it might tentatively be described as broadly French in style: it has a number of echoes in a design for a tureen by Thomas Germain³⁴ and a later Chelsea porcelain centrepiece.³⁵

Was the tureen a gift?

Unfortunately, while a large number of tureens and some centrepieces supplied by Boucheron are listed in the Turinese Royal archives from 1730 to 1760, there are none that could be definitively identified with any element of the Neptune centrepiece: the descriptions are simply not detailed enough. How and why did the Continental elements reach England by 1741 to be incorporated in the new work?

It is possible that the Turinese shell formed part of an object sent by the court of Savoy to the English court as a diplomatic gift, which was later reworked into its present form. The state of Savoy formed

30 For an example of a piece in this Régence style, see a design for a surtout, attributed to Claude II Ballin, 1727–28, Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, (inv. 9625).

31 Valadier, *Three Generations of Roman Goldsmiths*, exhib cat, David Carritt Ltd, London 1991, no1.

32 Victoria and Albert Museum, Department of Prints and Drawings, E.1261-97.

33 See Grimwade (as note 1), pl 46B.

34 E. Thompson, 'Thomas Germain', in *Royal Silver, The Property of George Ortiz*, Sotheby's New York, 13 November 1996, p26, pl 4; P. Fuhring, *Design, Drawings for Architecture, Costume and the Decorative Arts from 1570*, London 1989, pp42–45.

35 Created by Nicholas Sprimont in porcelain as the centrepiece to the Mecklenberg Chelsea service made under his direction in 1763 This service, now in the Royal

Collection, was commissioned by King George III and Queen Charlotte to be presented to the Queen's brother, Duke Adolphus Frederick IV of Mecklenberg-Strelitz, (Royal Collection inventory number: 57028). The service remained in the Mecklenberg-Strelitz family until 1919. It was presented to Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother in 1947 by James Oakes. Since no precedent for a porcelain centrepiece existed at this date, Sprimont was clearly echoing forms he had seen and used as a goldsmith. As Walpole pointed out on seeing the Chelsea service, 'The forms are neither new, beautiful nor various. Yet Sprimont, the manufacturer, is a Frenchman. It seems their taste will not bear transplanting.' Horace Walpole to Horace Mann, March 1763, *The Yale edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, W.S. Lewis (ed), 48 vols, New Haven and London, 1937–83, vol XXII, pp121–22.



10 Centrepiece, James Young, London 1786/87, with the arms probably of John Fitzgibbon, later Earl of Clare. This copy (and that in fig 2) proves that the largely unmarked Neptune centrepiece is eighteenth century and not a nineteenth-century concoction. (Sotheby's)

an important political ally to Britain, playing the role of buffer state between France and Austria (during both the War of Polish Succession and the War of Austrian Succession), and the position of envoy to Turin was sought after at the English court.³⁶ We know that the diplomatic representatives of Savoy in London adopted a Catholic community near Lincoln's Inn Fields, in effect raising it to the status of an embassy chapel, and that this was supplied at some point in the 1750s with a set of Catholic ecclesiastical plate marked by Boucheron.³⁷

Despite this cordiality however, it is unlikely that Frederick, Prince of Wales would have received any such diplomatic gift. By 1737 relations with his father, George II, had broken down to such an extent that all ambassadors to the Court of St James were forbidden contact with the Prince.³⁸ Whilst in happier times mission representatives to Britain would have called upon both the King and his eldest son, accounts by members of the royal household at this period make it clear that this was impossible.

It is also possible that the shell arrived by another route entirely and any of the pre-existing elements might have been imported as objects not enjoying the status of a diplomatic gift. It seems that the Customs Office was fairly ruthless in dealing with such pieces unless a considerable import duty was paid. An insight into this is given by Horace Walpole in a letter to Montagu on 7 September 1769:³⁹

Plate, of all earthly vanities, is the most impassible. It is not counterband in its metallic capacity, but totally so in its personal; and the officers of the Custom House not being philosophers enough to separate the substance where from the superficials, brutally hammer both to pieces and return to you only the intrinsic

It is possible that the shell was part of an object which had been the victim of one of these batterings, which might explain how such an obviously important and fashionable piece could arrive in England as so much scrap to be re-used. It is entirely speculative but no less likely that the Turinese element travelled to Paris where it was picked up by a member of Frederick's household. The links between Turin and Paris were significant during this period.⁴⁰

A further option is that Crespin or Sprimont were simply recycling part of an object sent to them for alteration or melting.

36 D.B. Horn, *The British Diplomatic Service 1689-1789*, Oxford 1961, pp26-7.

37 C. Oman, 'The Plate of the chapel of the Sardinian Embassy', *The Burlington Magazine*, October 1966, pp500-03. Victoria and Albert Museum (loan: St Anselm 1); the dating of these pieces remains problematic. The altar cross shows marked stylistic similarities to the monstrance of the Abbey of St Benigno Canavese circa 1750, see note 20 above, whereas the salver for the cruets from the Sardinian Embassy chapel silver is hallmarked with the city assay mark of Carlo Micha, assay-master in Turin from 1759 to 1787. The salver may of course be a later addition to the set.

38 See *The Diary of the First Earl of Egmont*, 3 vols, London 1923, vol II, p432. A note published on 10 September 1737 was issued to all members of the Court: 'Notice is hereby given to all Peers, Peeresses, Privy Councillors and their Ladies, and other persons in any station under the King and Queen that whoever goes to pay their Court to the Prince and Princess of Wales will not be admitted into His Majesty's presence.' On the same day Frederick was

asked to move out of St James's Palace and he took up residence at Kew.

39 Walpole's Correspondence (as note 35), vol X, p289; the plate when 'battered' would be freely importable as bullion. See also J. Smythe, *Practice of the Customs*, 1821, pp56 and 183. See also Philippa and Gordon Glanville, 'French Fancy' silver from Paris and English patrons' in *Rococo silver in England and its colonies*, special issue of *Silver Studies*, no20 2006.

40 Boucheron himself had spent time in Paris during the 1730s perfecting his art under the guidance of Thomas Germain and Francesco Ladatte, goldsmith and bronze-worker by appointment to Carlo Emanuele III (1701-73), had during his second sojourn in the French capital from 1730 to 1744 achieved significant official recognition. Juste-Aurèle Meissonnier, the dominant figure in Parisian rococo design and silversmithing was born in Turin in 1695 and, having learnt the art of the goldsmith in his father's workshop, left for Paris around 1730 being appointed within a few years to the coveted position of *Dessinateur du Roi* effectively becoming the supreme arbiter of taste at the court of Louis XV. Fina (as note 22), p10.



11 Two from a set of four sauceboats and stands from the Marine Service, Nicholas Sprimont, London 1743/44 and 1744/45, silver-gilt, the ladles unmarked. Width of stand: 28cm (11in).

The rest of the Marine Service

The debate over whether Sprimont was responsible for the alterations to the centrepiece rests upon the other objects that make up the Marine Service. As previously stated, the first documentary evidence to associate the service with Frederick is the 1832 royal inventory, which lists:

page 87

Four large Sauce Boats, with linings, each in form of a shell, supported by a Dolphin, with a chased Figure handle.[*fig 11*]

page 90 (Salts &c):

Two large chased Salts, each in the form of a Craw Fish.[*fig 14*]

Two large chased Salts, each in the form of a Lobster Crab.

Two large chased Salts (or Pickle Stands), each in the form of a Pearl Oyster Shell, and supported by a Triton.[*fig 12*]

Two large chased Salts (or Pickle Stands), each in the form of a Conch Shell, and supported by a Dragon.[*fig 13*]

page 92 (Ornaments for the centre of the Table):

A very large and superb Ornament for the Centre of the Table, supported by four Sea Horses, with chased rock and shell work, with large Shells for Trifles, &c. At the top, on Dolphins, is an oval chased Bason and Cover, surmounted by a Figure of Neptune, with Trident.[*fig 3*]

page 93 (Dessert plate):

Four shaped oval, deep Dessert Dishes, with chased shells, &c., inside. Eleven inches long.

page 101 (Knives, forks, and spoons):

Four ditto (ie salt ladles), for Lobster Crab & Crawfish Salts, with richly chased handles.

The list includes a pair of dishes in the shape of abalone shells supported by young tritons [*fig 12*] and a pair of low dragon dishes. [*fig 13*] None of these dishes is hallmarked but they were attributed to Sprimont on the basis of stylistic similarities to pieces marked by him in the service.⁴¹ The abalone shells show a fine degree of finish and may well have been cast from life, paralleling the quality of

41 Royal Collection inventory numbers 51392 (crab salts), 51393 (crayfish salts), and 51271 (sauceboats and stands); see J.

Roberts (ed), *Royal Treasures, a Golden Jubilee Celebration*, exhib cat, The Queen's Gallery, London, 2002, nos179-180.



12 (above left) One of a pair of dishes supported by tritons, unmarked.

13 (above right) One of a pair of low dragon dishes, unmarked.

The four dishes fit onto the base of the Neptune centrepiece (see fig 3.2Q).

14 (left) Crab salt, one of a pair, Nicholas Sprimont, London 1742/43, silver-gilt. A similar pair in the Marine Service is decorated with crayfish (see p24). Width: 17.8cm (7in).

casting found on both the crayfish and crab salts by Sprimont. In addition, although the dragon was something of a commonplace of rococo design,⁴² parallels between the dragon head on these dishes and the head on a tea-kettle in the Hermitage (Sprimont 1745/46) are striking.⁴³

The dishes, although associated with Frederick by the 1832 inventory, were listed on a separate page.⁴⁴ They were considered separate but complementary elements of the service⁴⁵ until 1997, when it was recognised that they fitted onto the base of the Neptune centrepiece as integral elements of the whole and this is how the piece has been subsequently described, photographed and displayed.⁴⁶

The dolphins on Sprimont's sauceboats of 1743/44 [fig 11] are extremely similar to those found supporting the tureen. The 1832 inventory had also separated the stands for these, marked by Sprimont for 1744/45; they were listed six pages later than the sauceboats under a separate heading of 'Dessert Plate'. This was repeated in the 1872 inventory, where the now alphabetically arranged lists place them some fourteen pages apart from the sauceboats and repeat the error, calling them 'Deep Dessert Dishes'.⁴⁷ The shape of these stands strikingly echoes that of the centrepiece and Sprimont has certainly successfully married a number of disparate elements to create a stylistically cohesive service.

42 See E. Barr and M. Snodin, *Rococo, Art and Design in Hogarth's England*, exhib cat, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 1984, pp113–14 (hereafter Barr and Snodin).

43 Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg, inventory number 7125; illustrated in Grimwade (as note 1), pl 56B.

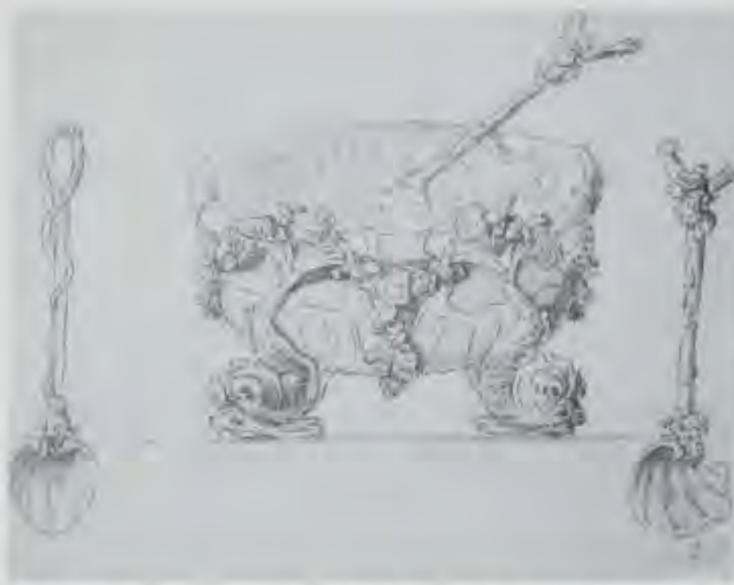
44 Both pairs are listed as salts or pickle stands on p90, with the centrepiece being listed on p92.

45 *Royal Plate from Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle*, exhib cat,

Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 1954, nos39, 43 & 44; *Treasures from the Royal Collection, Queen's Gallery, London, 1988–9*, nos114, 118 & 119.

46 *Princes as Patrons, The Art Collections of the Princes of Wales from the Renaissance to the Present Day*, exhib cat, National Museum & Gallery of Wales, Cardiff, 1998, no45; *Royal Treasures* (as note 40), no178.

47 This confusion was repeated in subsequent inventories and publications.



15 Nicholas Sprimont, design for a salt cellar, with two spoons, circa 1740, previously attributed to Matthew Lock. (V&A Images/Victoria and Albert Museum)

16 (right) Designs by Juste-Aurèle Meissonnier, published in 1735. The design on the right seems to have inspired Sprimont's crayfish salts, seen in fig 14.



48 Grimwade (as note 1), pp30-33, 47-48, and 'Crespin or Sprimont? An unsolved problem of Rococo silver', *Apollo*, August 1969. In the latter Grimwade compared Crespin's centrepiece of 1740 probably made for Charles, 6th Duke of Somerset (1662-1748), now in the Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio, a 1747 centrepiece or fruit basket by Sprimont engraved with the arms of John, 2nd Earl of Ashburnham (1724-1812), now in the Victoria and Albert Museum and a third centrepiece or epergne by John Parker & Edward Wakelin made in 1760 for Charles, 5th Duke of Bolton (1718-65), (present whereabouts unknown), concluding that the variations between the three objects suggested the 'existence of a group of designs from the same hand circulating among the London goldsmiths for at least two decades' rather than a common maker.

49 The theory was further explored by Elaine Barr in her monograph on George Wickes (see note 52), and her catalogue entries for the Rococo exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum (note 41). Both Grimwade and Barr concurred with Hayward's suggestion that Sprimont may have been involved in the Neptune centrepiece and drew attention to

many of the stylistic similarities shared with associated pieces attributed to or hallmarked by him in the Royal Collection.

50 The design for a 'salt' may indeed be that of the centrepiece. An interesting aside to this is that the Ashburnham centrepiece by Sprimont was adapted from a design for a salt by Benvenuto Cellini and the State Salt of the Corporation of the City of London, hallmarked by Augustine Courtauld in 1730 and standing on four dolphin legs, when seen in profile, strongly recalls the shape of the Neptune tureen in a much simpler form. Illustrated in C. Lever, 'The Courtauld Family of Goldsmiths', *Apollo*, August 1974, p138, fig 1.

51 N. Sprimont, *Design for a Salt Cellar and Three Spoons*, Victoria and Albert Museum, Dept of Prints and Drawings, no2592: originally attributed to Mathew / Matthias Lock but re-attributed to Sprimont partly on the basis of similarities to a design signed by him for a tureen for Thomas Coke (1697-1759), created Earl of Leicester, also in the V&A, Dept of Prints and Drawings, E.2606-1917.

52 The piece was originally marked to 'Lord Archd Hamilton' and then made over to Frederick Ritzau, Clerk to the Prince's Secretary.

Crespin and Sprimont

As Sprimont did not enter a mark at Goldsmiths' Hall until 1743, it has been suggested that Crespin may have marked the plateau on his behalf, and there is speculation that Sprimont may have arrived in England earlier than is usually supposed. The possibility also exists that Sprimont had spent time in Paris and he might conceivably represent the most likely channel by which the continental elements arrived in England. The hypothesis that Crespin sponsored his friend's work through the assay is based on the close proximity of Crespin and Sprimont's workshops in Compton Street, Soho, their known association and the similarities between the Toledo (Crespin) and V&A (Sprimont) centrepieces. Arthur Grimwade⁴⁸ concluded that the exact relationship between the two goldsmiths 'must probably remain undecided'.⁴⁹

Many have commented on the lack of a surviving design for the centrepiece and suggested that this is somewhat surprising given its obvious importance. In the light of the discovery that it was at least partially a re-working of existing objects, this seems less perplexing.⁵⁰

A final piece of evidence supporting Sprimont's involvement in the centrepiece is a design for a salt of circa 1740 attributed to him, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum.⁵¹ [fig 15] The design is strongly reminiscent of the centrepiece, the salt spoons on the right and shown in the salt are almost identical to those produced by Sprimont to go with his crab and crayfish salts. However, the spoon on the left of the design is extremely close to the ladles supplied by him with the Marine sauceboats. [fig 11] If the drawing is in effect scaled from the ladle on the left rather than the salt spoon on the right it can be seen to parallel the tureen even more closely. In addition, a pencil line has been firmly added at the base of the dolphins; is this merely to complete the design or does it suggest the plateau base of the centrepiece?

The work of Hayward, Grimwade and Barr led to the suggestion (albeit expressed with considerable caveats by Barr) that the centrepiece can be equated with an entry for a 'surtout compleat etc.' listed in the Wickes ledgers for 24 June 1742. On the same day there is an entry for shipping the object abroad, listed in the accounts under the name of Ritzau, a member of the household of the Prince of Wales.⁵² The theory was put forward that after having been assayed and hallmarked in London with Crespin's maker's mark, Wickes had the piece shipped to Liège with the complicity of the Prince's

household for finishing by Sprimont before being smuggled back into England, possibly when Sprimont settled in London in 1742.⁵³ However, evidence for this idea is somewhat limited and it suggests a rather peripheral involvement for Crespin.

In fact Crespin cannot be so easily marginalised. Apart from anything else, his close association with Sprimont is underlined by the existence of a salt with his pre-1739 maker's mark which is surely based on the Victoria and Albert Museum's design discussed above.⁵⁴ Furthermore it would be an exaggeration to state that the Neptune centrepiece shows no elements compatible with his other work; after all, whatever Sprimont's involvement, it still carries Crespin's mark. The strong design parallels with the Duke of Marlborough's wine coolers have already been noted, and the foaming shells so strikingly found on the base of the centrepiece are also found on a teapot marked by Crespin in 1740/41.⁵⁵ Crespin was capable of producing extremely fine work in the latest fashion, as can be seen from his candlestick of 1741/42 after a design by William Kent.⁵⁶ It is noteworthy that at exactly the same time as Crespin was marking a piece in the highest rococo fashion, he was also producing an object in the Kentian style.

The obvious explanation is that Sprimont and Crespin employed the same modeller to provide the initial figures for the sculptural details to complete the service and Roubiliac has been suggested as the most likely candidate.⁵⁷ Sprimont, however, appears to have been involved in both the designing and modelling processes to an unusual degree. Certainly by the time he was running the Chelsea factory he was described by André Rouquet as 'an able French artist [who] supplies or directs the models of everything that is manufactured there'.⁵⁸ After his death, his widow declared in court that he had 'by his superior skill and taste in the arts of drawing and modelling and painting instructed and perfected several apprentices, workmen and servants therein ...'.⁵⁹ Elaine Barr has argued that when Sprimont first came to England, he may well have earned his money by working as a modeller for fellow Huguenot craftsmen in London.⁶⁰ It is entirely feasible therefore, that he was working for Crespin, and that this resulted in Crespin's mark being found on a work that otherwise

carries many Sprimont characteristics. It is also possible that they divided the work on the service, Crespin taking the centrepiece and Sprimont the rest.

What is clear is that both Sprimont and Crespin were working from a multiplicity of design sources. Certain aspects of the Neptune centrepiece appear to echo elements of the mannerist designs by Cornelius II Floris of 1556⁶¹ which must have been fairly widely circulated by the mid-eighteenth century. The merfigures supporting the tureen are reminiscent of figures holding garlands above their heads in the Floris designs and the wings of the dragon dishes find echoes in the strange wing-like protuberances on the side of these figures (they would not be the only practitioners of the rococo to look to earlier designs for inspiration – de Lamerie was known to have owned and used prints illustrating the auricular style of the seventeenth century).⁶²

Elaine Barr has suggested that the male and female figures on the Sprimont sauceboats relate closely to baroque fountain sculpture⁶³ and that, specifically, close parallels can be drawn between them and the Liègeois fountain sculptures of Faydherbe, Van Bossuit and Grupello.⁶⁴

Sprimont's particular debt to Meissonnier must also be acknowledged. He based the crayfish salts in the Marine Service closely on Meissonnier's designs of 1723.[fig 16] Given the close relationship between these, it has always been rather curious that a similar source was not apparent for Sprimont's crab salts supplied at the same time. This anomaly was partially solved recently with the publication of miscellaneous items from the collection of Sir Hans Sloane now in the British Museum.⁶⁵ One of the pieces illustrated is a bronze inkwell, probably Italian, from the sixteenth century.⁶⁶ [fig 17] It was purchased by Sloane in 1725 at the cost of a guinea. It is almost identical in form to the crab salt, although a detailed physical comparison with the Royal Collection pieces revealed certain differences principally relating to the angle at which the crab sits and the arrangement of the shells around the base. Although possibly acting as a model for the salts, a casting was not taken directly from the inkwell. The salts would have been made up from a number of parts, probably cast from life, which would have been cast in silver using the

53 For a full discussion see Grimwade, and E. Barr, *George Wickes, Royal Goldsmith 1698-1761*, London 1980, pp163-66.

54 Christie's London, 25 November 1987 lot 206.

55 Grimwade (as note 1), p49, pl 58B.

56 Grimwade (as note 1), pls 72A and 72B.

57 T. Murdoch, 'The Huguenots and English Rococo', in Charles Hind

(ed), *The Rococo in England, A Symposium*, Victoria and Albert Museum, 1984, pp65-66; Tessa Murdoch draws attention to the close personal ties between Roubiliac and Sprimont pointing out that the latter stood as godfather to Roubiliac's daughter Sophie in 1744.

58 J.A. Rouquet, *The Present State of the Arts in England*, London, 1755.

59 Quoted in Bellamy

Gardner, *Transactions of the English Ceramic Circle*, 2, 1942, p140.

60 Barr 1996, p96.

61 Cornelius II Floris, *Veelderley Veranderinght von grotissen*, Victoria and Albert Museum, Dept. of Prints and Drawings, nos 17090 and 29170.

62 M. Snodin, 'Paul de Lamerie's Rococo', in *Paul de Lamerie, The Work of England's Master*

Silversmith, exhib cat. Goldsmiths' Hall, London, 1990, pp16-23.

63 Barr and Snodin (as note 42), p114.

64 Indeed a fountain of 1675 by Grupello for the House of the Fishmongers, now in the Brussels Museum, shows particular affinities with the centrepiece having as it does a figure of Neptune with trident and a nereid or female sea-nymph sitting in an

oval shell bowl, the lower half of which is encased in a ribbed shell, the whole being supported on four dolphins. Barr 1996 (as note 15), p95.

65 See J. Warren, 'Sir Hans Sloane as a collector of small sculpture', *Apollo*, February 2004.

66 Sloane 4.c.1040. 'A standish for ink in cast brasse wt. A hollow shell wt. Sevell. Others & a crab round it...1.1.0'



17 Bronze inkwell, probably Italian, sixteenth century, purchased by Sir Hans Sloane in 1725. (Trustees of the British Museum, London)

lost-wax method and may have been chased to a high degree of finish before being assembled and soldered together.⁶⁷ The design of the salts has also been adapted slightly in relation to the Sloane bronze by being placed on three low cast shell feet, which raises the similarly shaped open base platform off the ground. The inkwell in contrast sits directly on the surface on which it is placed.⁶⁸

No evidence has so far come to light as to when Sprimont might have seen Sloane's Italian bronze inkwell, although the collection was the subject of numerous visits by many of the leading figures of the day. Indeed Frederick, Prince of Wales himself visited the collection in 1748, but the contemporary account strongly suggests that this was his first visit.⁶⁹ However, Sloane was certainly known to Frederick before this date – in 1728, shortly after the Prince of Wales's arrival in England, Sloane, as President, had welcomed the Prince to the Royal Society. Moreover, Frederick greatly approved the opening of Sloane's collections to the public, particularly to young artists and students; in 1746 he ordered a dinner in Sloane's honour to be held in Chelsea. With Sloane's retirement to Chelsea Manor in 1742 and Sprimont's later involvement in the Chelsea porcelain factory, it is highly probable that Sprimont would have had occasion to visit the collection. Whether or not it was, in fact, Sloane's inkwell that acted as the model for Sprimont's crab salt, once more we see that the 'purest rococo creation in English silver' owes more to Italian antecedents than had been hitherto suspected.

67 See Vitali (as note 19), pp84–85.

68 A second bronze version of the crab exists in the Victoria and Albert Museum. This version's provenance is less clearly delineated, having been purchased by the Museum in the 1900s. Like the Sloane crab, the V&A piece varies slightly in size and composition to the Sprimont salt.

69 Cromwell Mortimer, first published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* 18, 1748, pp301–02: 'Their royal highnesses were not wanting in expressing their satisfaction and pleasure at seeing a collection, which surpass'd all the notions or ideas they had formed from even the most favourable accounts of it.'

Acknowledgements

Our thanks are due to everyone who has helped and encouraged us over the years, particularly Jonathan Marsden. We would also like to thank the following: Ellenor Alcorn, David Beasley, Sir Geoffrey de Bellaigue, Vanessa Brett, Pamela Clark, Ann Eatwell, Philippa Glanville, Christopher Hartop, Marie Leahy, Jessie McNab, Simon Metcalf, Lucy Morton, Tessa Murdoch, Stephen Murray, Sir Hugh Roberts, Timothy Schroder, William Snyman, Eleanor Thompson, Dora Thornton and Matthew Winterbottom.

*Minor details of great importance:
new insights into the marks of Nuremberg goldsmiths*

KARIN TEBBE

In the late Middle Ages and Renaissance Nuremberg was renowned as a production centre for goods of outstanding craftsmanship. These were distributed to customers all over Europe via a network of trade routes and intermediate dealers. Artfully made silver-gilt vessels were among the bestselling products of this export trade.

Despite this importance, an in-depth scientific study of the goldsmiths' craft in Nuremberg had been wanting for a long time before this serious gap was addressed twenty years ago, by the art historian Günther Schiedlausky, in a contribution to the exhibition catalogue *Wenzel Jamnitzer* (Nuremberg 1985). Günther Schiedlausky (1907–2003) was curator for decorative arts and guild collections at the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg from 1955 until 1970. To him and to Marc Rosenberg (1851–1930) we are indebted for providing the foundation of the work subsequently undertaken by our research project 'Forschungsprojekt zur Nürnberger Goldschmiedekunst am Germanischen Nationalmuseum' under the supervision of Ralf Schürer. This endeavour received the generous financial support of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft for eight years, until its conclusion in October 2005.

Marc Rosenberg's research, *Der Goldschmiede Merkzeichen*, was published in four volumes (1922–28); it includes Nuremberg goldsmiths' marks (in vol 3), together with other German marks (vols 1–3) and European marks (vol 4). It was a remarkable achievement at the time he was working. Covering in particular the period of the second half of the sixteenth to the late eighteenth century, it has remained the standard reference book until now. Apart from gathering a huge amount of detail for the biographies of the goldsmiths and their works of art, the research project of the Germanische Nationalmuseum finally has been able to expand the known material on Nuremberg marks and reproduce them in a way that was not possible in the 1920s.

The project's goal was the compilation and documentation, in a computer database, of all known Nuremberg goldsmiths' marks and the maximum number of objects possible thus marked. Currently this database is for

internal museum use only; up to now free access to it has not been available to the general public. Being allowed to pursue an intensive research effort like this over a space of several years must certainly be considered a privilege in these times of widespread cuts in scientific funding. The long duration of the project, however, made possible the establishment of a comprehensive archive which will be maintained and expanded even after the conclusion of the project.

The end of the project also saw the completion of a manuscript for a two-volume publication dealing with the silver marks, the goldsmiths and their production (*Nürnberger Goldschmiedekunst 1541–1868, Meister, Marken, Werke*), which will be published in 2007. The first volume will contain 1,150 biographies of master goldsmiths, and a listing of objects attributed to 400 different masters. All in all, some 900 different marks and nearly 3,000 works in silver have short descriptions. A lot of effort went into the production of the illustrations of the marks: casts were made of the original marks, which were then photographed. The book's manuscript also contains a section on dubious marks and objects purporting to be attributable to Nuremberg. This reference work aims to provide its users with the means of assessing the work of the Nuremberg goldsmiths, enabling them to discern between authentic, dubious or false Nuremberg silver marks. The second volume, containing the plates, provides several hundred images in black-and-white of a representative cross-section of the products of the goldsmiths' craft in Nuremberg. This material encompasses not only eminent masterpieces, but basic items as well.

The study covers more than three centuries. The master's mark was first introduced in Nuremberg in 1541 and lasted until the introduction of freedom of trade in 1868 brought an end to the law requiring marking. The formerly free imperial city had been annexed by the kingdom of Bavaria in 1806; the introduction of the freedom of choice of one's trade or occupation in 1868 effectively put an end to the traditional organisation of craftsmen. While this did not mean that the goldsmiths stopped working, they were free of the surveillance of municipal supervising authorities, and as a result the practice of marking changed as well. The imperial

stamp that was then introduced throughout Germany consisted of a crescent, a crown and a number giving the content of silver. This standard was eventually made mandatory in the final third of the nineteenth century. Throughout the existence of the municipal stamp law, the products of the goldsmiths were marked with a capital N as a guarantee of regularly inspected and approved ware. Only after receiving this mark could the items be sold and customers were thereby given an assurance that the silver content and standard of craftsmanship conformed to the regulations of the Nuremberg statutes of trade. The marks thus became more a hallmark of quality than a personal signature. They made it possible to identify and possibly seek redress from a craftsman who had delivered inferior work. This effectively ensured a high standard of workmanship in the silverware output of the free imperial city.

The substantial material for our study could not have been brought together without the co-operation of museums in Germany and abroad, as well as church inventory institutions, private collectors and dealers. In addition, several research trips abroad were necessary

and these took us to Russia, the USA, Israel and through Western Europe, allowing us to analyse and document the relevant collections of many institutions in person. We were gratified to receive a generally positive response and willing support in this undertaking, and preliminary results of our research have already found their way into exhibition projects and collection catalogues of various museums. Inevitably, some objects which had hitherto been considered genuine goldsmiths' products from Nuremberg have had to be struck from the list in the light of the results of our research. The collections of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum were themselves afflicted by this revision, with several attributions having to be corrected.

The Germanisches Nationalmuseum can look back on a long tradition of research into this aspect of craftsmanship. The works of Nuremberg goldsmiths throughout the centuries have always formed a core collection within its overall holdings. The results of our recent research will be presented to a wider public: an exhibition scheduled for the autumn of 2007 will form the magnificent culmination of our endeavours.

Acknowledgements

The author thanks Martin Baumeister, Nürnberg, for his help with the English translation.

The article was published in a slightly different form in: 'Der Teufel liegt im Detail. Neues zu Nürnberger Silbermarken', *Kulturgut. Aus der Forschung des Germanischen Nationalmuseums*, 1/2006, Heft 8, S. 13-14. The author's previous article on the research project 'Nuremberg marks in the late eighteenth century' was published in *The Silver Society Journal*, no15 2003.



Courtesy: Nürnberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum

Karin Tebbe, Ursula Timann and Thomas Eser, *Nürnberger Goldschmiedekunst 1541–1868*, 2 vols, ISBN 10 3-936688-17-6 ISBN 13 978-3-936688-17-7.

People

Marc Rosenberg (1851–1930) Art historian and collector

JOHANN MICHAEL FRITZ



Born 22 March 1851 Kamienic-Podolskii (Russia); died 4 September 1930 Baden-Baden (Germany), buried at Würzburg

Son of Hessel Marcowitsch Rosenberg (1818–84) and Eleone (née Günzburg) (1819–1905); six siblings

Married, first Minna von Neuschotz (d. 1880) and secondly (at Hamburg in 1882) Mathilde Warburg (1863–1922). Three children, one son and two daughters

Childhood in St Petersburg and Paris. Studied in Bonn and Heidelberg

1877: Graduation in Heidelberg under the archaeologist Karl Bernhard Stark (doctoral thesis on the high altar in Munster zu Altbreisach); appointed assistant at the Kunstgewerbemuseum Leipzig

1883: Private tutor in the history of the decorative arts at the Technische Hochschule in Karlsruhe

1887: Appointed honorary professor

1891: Appointed knight of the Zähringer Order of the Lion (1st class) (with bar 1906)

1893: Appointed honorary professor for decorative painting, decorative arts and minor arts at the Technische Hochschule in Karlsruhe

1903: Councillor of Baden

1906: Awarded the Cross of the Russian order of St Anne

1908: Privy Councillor

Only rarely is a scholar's great work, on which he devoted so much heart and money, still known by everyone – museum curators, art dealers or collectors – decades after his death, under the familiar cipher 'R₃'. Nor was this an exciting book of art history, but rather an extremely single-minded and remarkably useful reference work, with whose help, as its title *Der Goldschmiede Merkzeichen* ('The Goldsmiths' Mark') suggests, one can unravel all the town marks and makers' marks of European silver. The four volumes are distinguished by their fine layout and exemplary typography, a quality

which is much more evident in the original edition of 1922–28 than in the later condensed reprint.

The first edition appeared in 1890 with a selection of 2,000 marks, the second followed in 1911 with 6,000. In his forward the compiler wrote 'if one would do me the honour of referring to my "Marks" simply as "R", then I would suggest that, for example, no. 301 of the second edition be cited with R₂'. For the third edition, now cited as R₃, the author had personally examined 20,000 objects.

This thorough grounding in the objects themselves led

Rosenberg to realise that it is only through a knowledge of techniques that one can come to understand their art historical values. His *History of Goldsmiths' Work from Technical Foundations*, published between 1910 and 1922 in various volumes admittedly remains a 'torso' but, as the 1972 reprint shows, is still very useful. For this the author did not only rely upon his great knowledge of European and Near Eastern cultures (including ancient Egypt, Troy, Mycenae, as well as the Greek, Etruscan and Roman worlds) but brought scientific research to bear, publishing selected objects with excellent photographs and details, most of which he ordered at his own expense.

Rosenberg grew up in St Petersburg and Paris and trained as a merchant and banker. First in Bonn and then in Heidelberg he studied art history and archaeology and there, most unusually for the time, graduated in 1877 with a monograph on the late gothic 'Breisacher' high altar of the master HL. His major collaboration in the great Karlsruhe Art and Craft exhibition of 1881 led to an deep involvement with all types of decorative arts, to his formal admission as an academic lecturer and finally to his appointment as honorary professor of 'decorative painting, works of art and minor arts' at the Technische Hochschule in Karlsruhe. He became especially involved with architects, who, since 1907 were also examined in the decorative arts. As an academic teacher Rosenberg must have been delighted with the wider popularity of his extremely lively lectures, such as 'the history of church vessels' or 'modern movements in works of art'.

In his enthusiastic review of Rosenberg's *Sources for the history of Heidelberg Castle* (1882) Wilhelm Lübke, the influential Karlsruhe art history professor of the day, wrote that Rosenberg combined 'an artistic eye with an enquiring philosophical and historical mind'. To publish sources and extend the knowledge of historical objects, furnishing the stones for the mosaic of research, was his main concern in his documentation of the works of the great Nuremberg Renaissance goldsmith Wenzel Jamnitzer (1920). His individual style of writing always remains extremely taut and spurns wordy overviews.

Thanks to the generous support of the Archduke he was able to publish magnificent illustrated volumes such as Hans Baldung's sketch book (1889), the *Kunstkammer in Karlsruhe Castle* (1892) and 'Baden princely pictures' (1908).

Alongside his scholarly work, through which he acquired an international reputation, Rosenberg dedicated himself to collecting evidence of the history, art and culture of Baden that, as a Jew from tsarist Russia, had become his adoptive homeland. His famous 'Baden collection', consisting of documents, manuscripts, autographs, memorials, pictures of Baden uniforms and folk costumes, was recorded in twelve catalogues. Among the documents in the collection, the oldest was a state

paper of Otto II relating to Mosbach and dated 976 and the most recent the instrument of capitulation for Rastatt of 1849.

His research activities and the acquisition of his multifaceted collection were only possible thanks to his private financial resources. His father was active in the timber and sugar trades, in addition to the family connection with the banking firms of Günzburg in Paris and St Petersburg and Warburg in Hamburg. These enabled him to travel, to obtain photographs, to publish his books and even to employ scholarly collaborators in the private research institute, which he set up, first in Karlsruhe and later in Baden-Baden. The card indexes were reproduced and some of his collections and research materials were generously given or sold to different institutions on favourable terms. His famous collection of jewellery, however, had to be sold in 1929 because of the currency crisis.

Financially secure though his life might have been almost until the end, his personal life was not exempt from misfortune: he outlived both his wives – the second came from the well-known Hamburg banking family Warburg – and his three children; he himself had to take refuge in Schapbach in the Black Forest in 1915 when an important part of his collection was destroyed by arson. Typical of this great scholar of the old school are the printed cards which he inserted in his publications:

Presented by Marc Rosenberg, Schapbach (Baden) with the polite request not to trouble yourself to acknowledge.

Sources:

General regional archives, Karlsruhe (M. Salaba, H. Schwarzmaier, *Die Bestände des Generallandesarchivs Karlsruhe*, Part 1, *Selekte, Nachlässe und Sammlungen*, 1988, p142, S. Marc Rosenberg (Baden collections); *Generallandesarchiv Karlsruhe 60/915*; Otto von Falke, *Sammlung Marc Rosenberg* (auction catalogue), Ball/Graupe, Berlin, 1929; Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum. u.a. from the Art History Institute of the University of Bonn and the Bayerischen Nationalmuseum, Munich; Freiburg, Institute for Christian Archaeology and Art History of the University.

Literature:

Badische Landeszeitung, 23 May 1908.

Paul Clemen, *Die Pyramide*, 16, 1927, no12 p48.

Trauerfeier am 9 Sept. 1930 in Baden-Baden. Geheimer Hofrat Professor Dr Marc Rosenberg Dr Ing. v. h. starb am 4 September 1930 im 80 Lebensjahr (Darmstadt 1930, 19pp), [a celebration of the life of Rosenberg, with obituaries by S. Warburg, P. Clemen, K. Obser, and P. Ladewig].

Joseph Sauer, *Oberrheinische Kunst*, 5, 1932, pp241–44.

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Originally published in Bernhard Ottnad (ed), *Badische Biographien*, Neue Folge Band IV, Stuttgart (W. Kohlhammer Verlag), 1996, pp240–42.

Translated by Timothy Schroder.

Peter Hopwood: a goldsmith in Preston

CATHLYN AND SIMON DAVIDSON

A number of pieces of silver have come to the notice of the authors over the last six years which bear the mark PH conjoined, generally struck three times and with no other mark. The mark has been found with either a square punch or a distinctly rounded punch. All the pieces have a connection with the north-west of England; three of them are still in parishes adjacent to Preston and four bear contemporary inscriptions with dates ranging from 1729 to 1732.

This maker's mark, with a round punch, was first reported by Cripps, unattributed, on a beaker then at Kirkham, Lancashire, with an inscribed date of 1728.¹ Five other pieces with this mark have been identified to date.



1 Communion beaker for the sick, Peter Hopwood, circa 1732. Height 9.5cm (3¾in). Engraved with the inscription 'Poculum Ev'xapieias in usum Infumorum et AEgrorum 1732' and the sacred monogram IHS within rays. This has a delightful mix of Latin and Greek for the Eucharist; the translation is 'The cup for the Eucharist for the use of the infirm and sick'. The maker's mark is struck three times just below the rim with a square punch. This almost certainly came from a local hospital foundation. This communion beaker was purchased in the north-west together with a small fitted paten, with a contemporary inscribed date of 1735, which has the mark of the Chester goldsmith Richard Richardson II with Chester assay marks but no date letter. (Private collection)



A tentative attribution for this mark, to Peter Hopwood of Preston, was made by Ridgway and Priestley.² He is the only goldsmith of that time working in the north-west of England who fits the mark. No other candidate can be identified from either Liverpool or Chester and their surrounding areas. It would seem from this admittedly limited number of items, that although the initials of his mark remained constant, the punch shape changed from a round punch to a square punch sometime between 1729 and 1732. We have searched for documentary evidence on Peter Hopwood and a sur-

1 W.J. Cripps, *Old English Plate*, London 1926, p133; the location of this piece is now unknown.

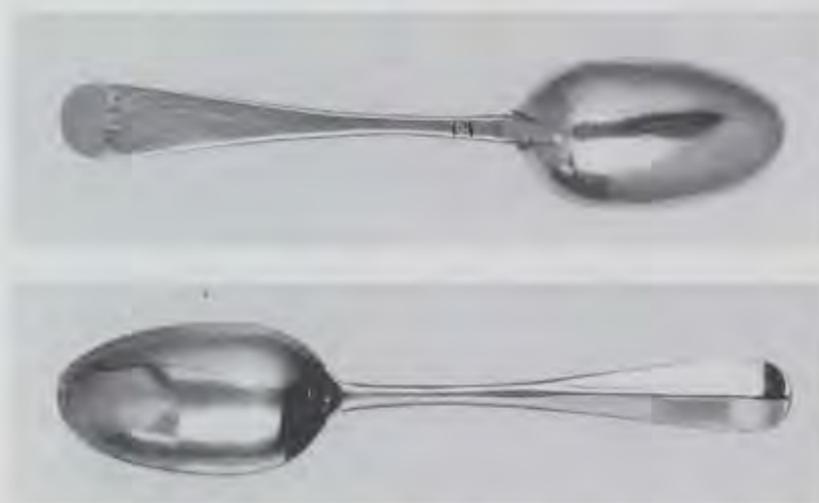
2 M.H. Ridgway & P.T. Priestley, *The Compendium of Chester Gold & Silver Marks 1570 to 1962*, Woodbridge 2004, p489.



2 Communion cup, circa 1729. Height 17.6cm (7in). Engraved 'The gift of Rachel Derbyshire to the Church of Brindle An Dom 1729' found in the parish church of Brindle, just to the west of Preston. It was made to match an earlier communion cup, London 1673/74, although the piece with the conjoined PH mark is slightly heavier. It is of good gauge and compares favourably with its earlier twin. The maker's mark is struck three times just below the rim with a round punch. (St James's Church, Brindle, Lancs)



3 Pair of communion cups, circa 1732. Height 18.9cm (7½in). Of typical eighteenth-century style they have the maker's mark with a square punch struck three times just below the rim. They are engraved with the sacred monogram IHS within rays, beneath the Latin inscription 'Capellae de Broughton Sacrum 1732' and were found in the parish church of Broughton, on the outskirts of Preston. In 1732 Broughton was a chapelry in the parish of Preston and did not become an independent parish until the nineteenth century. The underneath of each foot is inscribed 'The gift of the Reverend Samuel Peploe Arch Deacon of Richmond and Vicar of Preston'. Samuel Peploe was the son of the Bishop of Chester and was presented to the living of Preston on 4 July 1727 and installed the same day by his father; eleven months later he was, in addition, made the Archdeacon of Richmond. Peploe was an important figure in Preston society; his father had also been Vicar of Preston and he had been brought up there. (St John the Baptist, Broughton, Lancs)



4 Double drop teaspoon, circa 1735. Length 11.3cm (4½in). A single maker's mark in a square punch and initials MK. It was found in the north-west. (Private collection)

3 No record can be found and unfortunately the baptismal records for Liverpool in the likely period covering his birth are incomplete; all his co-apprentices were drawn from Liverpool.

4 The National Archives, Board of Stamps Register of Apprentice Indentures of Great Britain, IR1 Book 45 f126: indenture of 5

September 1718 with stamp paid on 18 September 1718 in Liverpool by Benjamin Brancker. See also Guildhall Library, *The Society of Genealogists Index to the Apprentice Indentures of Great Britain 1710-62* (hereafter AI of GB) p2913, a truncated abbreviation of entries in Board of Stamps Register.

prising amount of information has come to light, together with some new information on other goldsmiths working in Preston.

Peter Hopwood is likely to have been born in Liverpool or the surrounding area.³ In 1718 Peter Hopwood, son of John Hopwood deceased, was apprenticed to Benjamin Brancker, goldsmith of Liverpool, for a consideration of £40, a significant premium.⁴ Brancker was an influential goldsmith working in Water Street, Liverpool. In a letter dated 15 June 1715 he, along with other merchants of Liverpool, had petitioned the Mayor and Corporation of Chester to grant them trading privileges in the city by becoming Freeman. The letter also specifically requested that Benjamin Brancker, as leader of the group, should be admitted as a Freeman of Chester and he was duly admitted without fee in September 1715; the other merchants were to be admitted on taking up residence in Chester.⁵ Brancker had a number of apprentices,

Christopher Case 1711, Edward Clayton 1711, Richard Ellison 1716, Peter Hopwood 1718, William Lawton 1718, Gerard Potter 1723⁶ each paying £25 to £40, a sum that probably indicates Brancker's importance.⁷ Peter Hopwood would have finished his seven-year apprenticeship in Liverpool in 1725.

It would seem that Hopwood, soon after completion of his apprenticeship, decided to move to Preston to set himself up as a goldsmith. 'Peter Hopwood of Liverpool now of Preston Jeweller & Goldsmith' was sworn an 'Inn Burgess'⁸ of the borough of Preston before Mayor Richard Addison on 24 January 1727/8 and paid the assessed fee of £10.⁹ This was a significant sum of money for somebody starting out to trade in a new area and could clearly only be paid by someone of substance. To be accepted so soon after completing his apprenticeship and coming from another area, was exceptional. There had been only two goldsmiths listed by the Preston Guild in 1722: Richard Bolton and John Kitchin.

From the early seventeenth century Preston was generally recognised as the administrative and social centre of Lancashire; nowhere else enjoyed such a convenient and accessible location. Its favourable position was at the geographical centre of the county, where the great north-south road met, in the Ribble valley, the main routes from east and south-west Lancashire. By the early eighteenth century Preston had developed a social life and a season, widely regarded as equal to those of other fashionable and highly respectable county centres. It was far more important than either Manchester or Lancaster within the county and only Liverpool, as a port, was a possible rival. The wealthy and powerful leaders of Lancashire viewed Preston as a centre for their annual round of entertainment, business and pleasure; it was therefore an ideal place, with a population with disposable income, in which to start a goldsmith's business.¹⁰

On 27 October 1730 the Chester Goldsmiths' Company record in their minute book¹¹

It was unanimously agreed by all the Brothers of the sd Company that Peter Hopwood of Preston in Lancashire Goldsmith having been convicted of selling two large silver spoons under the standard required by an Act of Parliament made in the reign of the late King William the Third by which he has incurred severall penalties this company thinks proper and does accordingly order that the clerk of the sd Company shall at the expense of the sd Company presente ye sd Peter Hopwood for such his sd offence in such manner as the clerk shall think proper with all speed.

On 12 July 1731, presumably after the clerk had dealt with Peter Hopwood, and we do not know how, there is a minute:

Mr Crichley was pd for the spoons bought at Preston the one pound eight shillings he pd and ten shillings was allowed him for his expenses and one shilling was pd to the Assay Master for two assays made on the sd plate.

It would seem from the above that Peter Hopwood had come to the notice of the Chester assay office, who were concerned about so called 'ruslers' selling silver in 'town' in 1731.¹² What is interesting is that the 1730 entry is the only instance in the Chester Goldsmiths' minute books of a Warden going some distance to make a search.¹³

The Poor Tax records for Preston of 29 June 1732 show Peter Hopwood renting a house and shop on the South side of Churchgate (now Church Street) with a yearly rental of £6 11s 6d. He leased the house and shop from John Winkley, who paid the tax

5 *Cheshire Sheaf*, third series, vol 57, 10901, 10904, 10917. In order to be allowed to trade in Chester, Brancker and the other merchants would have had to be Freemen of the city.

6 Lancashire Record Office (hereafter LRO), *Lancashire Marriage Bonds 1739-45*, vol 100, p69. The Record Society of Lancashire & Cheshire. 'Gerard Potter, Preston, Silversmith at Preston Bondsman at a marriage'. He was a co-apprentice of Peter Hopwood in Liverpool to Benjamin Brancker and was perhaps working as a journeyman either under Hopwood or James Kitchin, the only other goldsmiths in the Guild, when he acted as bondsman. As he was not a member of the Guild of Preston he could not trade.

7 Guildhall, A1 of GB pp969, 1125, 1804, 2913, 3491, 4678.

8 A burgess was an 'inhabitant of a borough who possessed full municipal rights; a magistrate or member of the governing body of a town' (OED). In order to trade in Preston in the early eighteenth century, a person had to join the Preston Guild and live in the town. As a burgess they elected the Mayor and some sat as magistrates, having been sworn in by Aldermen. An 'In Burgess' lived in the town, whereas an 'Out Burgess' (very often someone who had moved away from Preston but was the son or grandson of an 'In' burgess) lived outside the town and had fewer rights. Elements of this system still apply in the City of London. The 'In' burgesses of the Guild of Preston had to enter or

renew their registration on the Guild Roll every twenty years, however in between Guild Rolls the Mayor could enter new burgesses on payment of a fee. In 1722 the Guild reiterated the 32 trades that required membership, goldsmiths being one of them. (LRO, Preston Guild Roll 1722, CNP2/1/13.)

9 LRO, *Preston Orders of Council 1608-1781*, The White Book, CNP3/1/1.

10 A. Crosby, *The History of Preston Guild*, Preston 1991, pp45-46.

11 Cheshire Record Office, *Minute Book of the Company of Goldsmiths & Watchmakers* (hereafter CRO minute bk) 2G12/2, pp19-20. The two Wardens, Benjamin Crichley and John Melling, the Assay Master, Thomas Maddock and six other brothers, signed this.

12 As note 11.

13 Distances between towns in Lancashire and Cheshire are considerable and the terrain difficult. Preston was a minimum of two days' ride from Chester and dangerous, with highwaymen on the road. A goldsmith such as Peter Hopwood used only his maker's mark, and would have made little or no effort to send his work to Chester for assay due to the risk and expense involved. If Hopwood was selling his wares through pedlars or other traders, perhaps outside Preston, the Assay Master may have felt obliged to check on his activities, but this must suggest that his business was large enough to make undertaking such a search worthwhile.

on the premises and, incidentally, was owner of a large number of Preston properties. There is a Winkley Square in the town today. The Poor Tax records also show¹⁴

Monthly rate of the Poor Tax upon all such persons that have neither land nor Housing within the said Burrough and the liberties thereof that are assessed for their personalities – Peter Hopwood, Silversmith, 8d monthly.

Peter Hopwood appears, as silversmith, in the Liverpool Freeman's Register 1692–1780 as having gained his freedom on 22 April 1734.¹⁵ This was six years after he began to practise as a jeweller and goldsmith in Preston. Presumably he needed to obtain the right to sell his silver in Liverpool. His former master Benjamin Brancker died later that year and we can only speculate that he may have handed his business over to his ne'er-do-well son, John, thus giving Hopwood an opportunity to compete for his trade; alternatively Brancker may have passed his business directly to Hopwood.

Documentary evidence of his personal life starts with his marriage to Jennet Sollom of Walton Le Dale, Lancashire in 1739.¹⁶ Jennet produced six children by Peter Hopwood in the space of ten years, of whom five survived childhood; all were baptised at St John's Parish Church, Preston.¹⁷

Hopwood clearly took an active part in the affairs of the borough as a burgess (many other burgesses were inactive). On the Guild Roll for 1742, there is an entry for Peter Hopwood of Preston, silversmith and James Kitchin of Preston, silversmith, son of John Kitchin a silversmith deceased.¹⁸ Peter Hopwood appears again in the 1762 Guild Roll, listed this time as a goldsmith, along with an entry for his son John, free by patrimony. The Kitchin family were well represented by two members as silversmiths resident in Preston, and another who had moved to Hull.¹⁹

A number of burgesses residing in the borough were sworn to sit with the Mayor, or in his absence the Recorder, on the Great Court Leet. This court met to deal with cases brought before it by the officers of the borough and in effect was what we would now regard as the Borough Magistrates' Court. They were empowered to issue penalties (fines or a period in the stocks). Once a year a selection of the burgesses, appointed and sworn by the Aldermen, elected the Mayor and officers of the borough. Peter Hopwood's name appears 22 times on various Great Court Leets and also for assemblies of burgesses for mayoral elections from 16 May 1728 until 5 October 1770.²⁰ He appears on the voters' list of 8 May 1741 to elect two Members of Parliament for the borough.²¹ He was noted as a witness for two marriage bonds in 1733 and 1744²² and in 1753 he appears in the records of the Quarter Sessions at Preston as a witness in a case against Thomas Singleton:²³

Thomas Singleton of Chippin (gentleman) did feloniously steal take seven silver coat buttons, value seven pence, and one silver spoon value four pounds belonging to William Parkinson.

Hopwood probably sold the items to the victim, William Parkinson.

Peter Hopwood was buried at St John's Parish Church, Preston on 18 August 1773²⁴ just 12 days after drawing up his will, in which he left £250 to each of his daughters Mary, Ellen, Ann and Margaret; his son John in Wigan was to have his Bond of £250 released to him. His wife Jennet was left, besides his household effects, 'the management of shop goods and stock in trade' to carry on in business as she

14 LRO, *Regulation of the Poor Tax*, Preston 29 June 1732 Section A&C p90, CNP3/1/11.

15 Liverpool Record Office, *Freemen's Register 1692-1780*, 352CLE/REG2/1.

16 LRO, *St Leonard's, Walton Le Dale Parish Register*. Peter Hopwood married Jennet Sollom on 27 April 1739 in the Parish of Walton Le Dale, which is the next parish south of Preston. Jennet was the second child of seven born to Richard and Ellen Sollom (yeoman) of Walton Le Dale and she was baptised on 28 June 1715.

17 LRO, *St John's Parish Church Registers, Preston* (hereafter St John), baptisms. Mary born 16 November, bapt 4 December 1740; Ellen born and bapt 18 April 1743; Jennet born 20 March, bapt 10 April 1745, died 14 April 1751; John born 23 May, bapt 11 June 1747; Ann born and bapt 18 October 1748; Margaret born 12 December 1750, bapt 1 January 1751.

18 LRO, *Preston Guild Roll 1742*, CNP2/1/14.

19 LRO, *Preston Guild Roll 1762*, CNP2/4/2.

Hopwood, Peter of Preston, Goldsmith; Hopwood, John his son; Kitchin, James late of Preston now of Manchester, Silversmith; Kitchin, John his son, Silversmith; Kitchin, James his brother, Silversmith; Kitchen, John of Hull, Silversmith, brother of the first named John; Kitchin, James his son.

20 LRO, *Proceedings of the Great Court Leet*, vols 3 & 4 1701–1800, CNP3/2/4-5.

21 LRO, *Freemen inhabitants who voted for Members of Parliament 8 May 1741*, DDP131/3.

22 LRO, *Lancaster Marriage Bonds*, 25 April 1733 of Richard Shaw of Preston in County of Lancaster, Joiner and Sarah Wall of the same, Spinster. Witness Peter Hopwood. LRO, *Lancaster Marriage Bonds*, 10 August 1744 of Richard Carruthers of Kirkham in County of Lancaster, Ganger & Jane Brown of the same, Spinster. Witness Peter Hopwood.

23 LRO, *Quarter Session Court 12 February 1753*, QJ1/1/1753/Q2/09 April 1753.

24 LRO, *St John, burials*.

thought fit and the interest and profit on all 'other monies and securities' for her natural life. At her death all his estate was then to be passed equally to the four daughters.²⁵ Interestingly son John, a linen manufacturer in Wigan, is not mentioned as a beneficiary.²⁶

It would appear that right up until his death Peter Hopwood was carrying on business at his shop. He was a man of some substance, evidenced by the bequests he made and that his will makes mention that his wife was to receive interest from 'other monies and securities', separate from the business. His wife Jennet died seven years later, in 1780.²⁷ His two spinster daughters, Ellen and Mary, who survived until 1828 and 1829, died with healthy estates.²⁸

In summary, the circumstantial evidence for attributing the conjoined PH mark to Peter Hopwood at Preston is substantial. He had trained under the pre-eminent goldsmith of Liverpool, Benjamin Brancker, and had been accepted into the Guild of Preston at an early age, which in itself was recognition. It would seem he received the patronage of the Vicar of Preston, later Archdeacon of Richmond, early on in his career. We would therefore suggest that based on the evidence above, the attribution to Peter Hopwood is now practically certain, although he did not register a mark at Chester assay office.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful for the assistance of David Beasley, Librarian of the Goldsmiths' Company for putting us in touch with the Salmesbury NADFAS church recorders group and for their assistance in locating several pieces. Our thanks to the parishes of Brindle and Broughton for permission to photograph their communion cups.

25 LRO, WRW/A 1775, Will of 'Peter Hopwood of Preston in the County Palatine of Lancaster Silversmith' drawn up on 6 August 1773; his executors were Jennet Hopwood and John Lavague, a fellow Inn-Burgess of Preston.

26 LRO, *Stamp Entries of Burgesses Freeman 1782* Preston, CNP2/4/3. Entry for a Hopwood, Peter son of John of Wigan Linen manufacturer (this is the goldsmith's son and grandson).

27 LRO, *St John*, buried 19 May 1780.

28 LRO, WRW/A1828, Will of Ellen Hopwood of Preston departed 8 October 1828, 'bequeathed to her sister Mary Hopwood sum of £600 also all the plate, glass and china, books,

linen, wearing apparel and effects of what nature' Her executors were her brother-in-law Richard Newsham, husband of her sister Margaret, and Mary Hopwood; the probate administration states the estate was under £800. LRO, WRW/A 1829, Will of Mary Hopwood of Preston, departed 5 December 1829. Her will was a mirror image of her sister Ellen's with her brother-in-law as executor. However the probate administration states that value of estate was under £1,500, no doubt increased by her sister's death the year before. Presumably as her named inheritor Mary had predeceased her, the estate passed to her brother-in-law and his wife Margaret, her sister.

Where are they now?

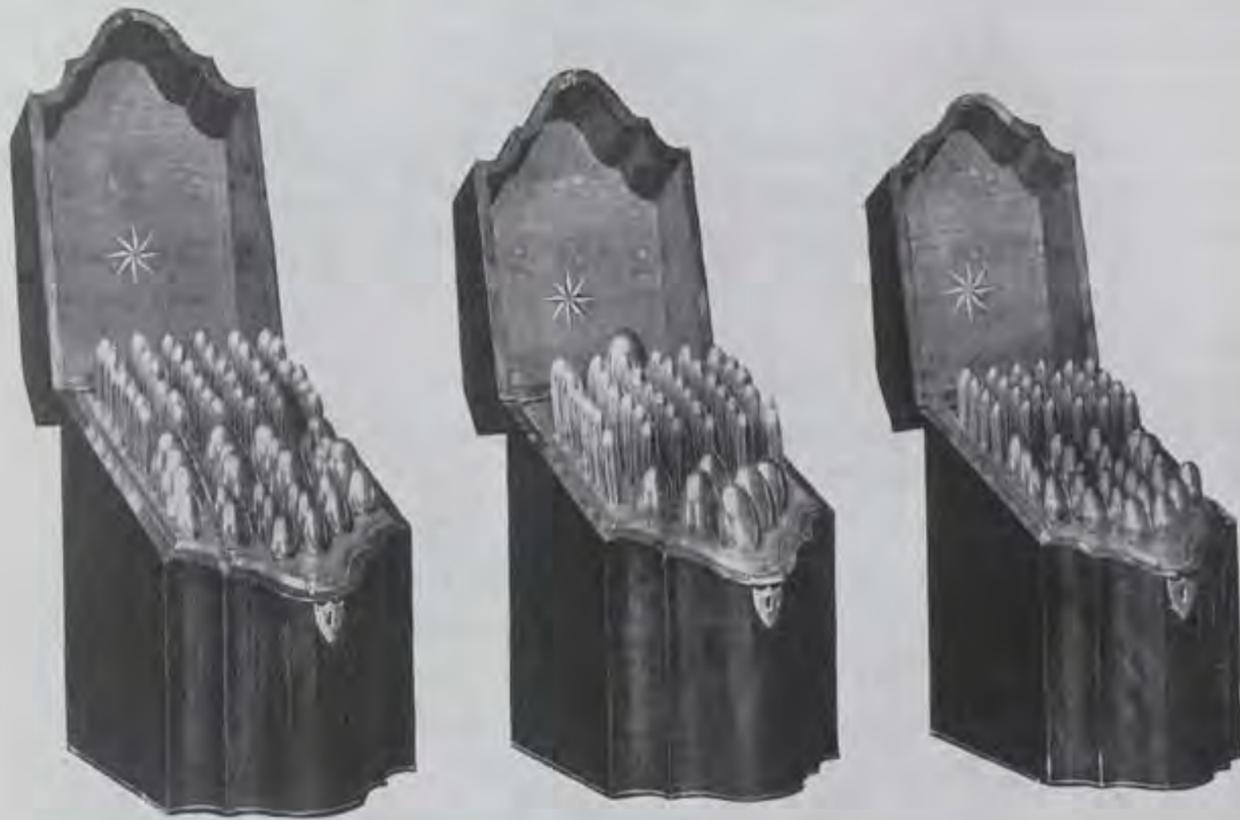
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XXXVI

Philippa Glanville came across this advertisement in *The Connoisseur* (July 1928) when working on a talk to a recent seminar in New York on food and drink (see *Books and exhibition catalogues*, p134). Any dealer today will tell you that times are not what they were: it is rare now to find a single knife box complete with original contents, let alone 'a set of three, circa 1771'.

Lovers of country house opera would be interested in the advertisement in the same issue for the auction of the contents of Garsington Manor (by direction of Philip Morrell). Also advertising were Reginald Davis (set of chessmen presented to George III by one of his physicians); Bert & Co. ('unique design' of teapot, W. Fountain 1798); J.C. Vickery (for fitted dressing cases, shagreen, cigarette and vanity cases); Martin & Co. Ltd (vase, Aldridge and Green, 1783/84) and many other, now largely forgotten, dealers in silver and pewter – a range not seen today.

The 'figure-between' goldsmiths of eighteenth-century Edinburgh

RODNEY R. DIETERT AND JANICE M. DIETERT

Edinburgh goldsmiths have employed fairly simple methods of maker identification over the last 500 years. Most often they have used some form of their name, either their initials or a portion of their last names. If further distinguishing features were desired, they might place these elements in a shaped shield or add adornments such as crowns, pellets, or swags. Periodically, something might be placed between the initials like a pellet, a star, a sword or a tear-drop. However, two marks from mid-eighteenth century Edinburgh are entirely novel in their efforts at identification. These are the marks with a standing human figure positioned between the two initials.

One of these marks, 'IW figure between' has been attributed to James Welsh.¹ The other, 'IM figure between', has remained unattributed. This mark is well-represented on pieces with Edinburgh date marks spanning the period 1735/36–1752/53, but it seems likely that pieces identified underestimate extant pieces by this maker. Because this maker's mark was not listed by Jackson,² some pieces described in early auction catalogues and dealer inventories as having an IM mark (and potentially attributed to others) may have actually carried the figure-between mark. Having amassed a database of extant Scottish silver and constructed a training lineage of Edinburgh goldsmiths with the assistance of Henry Steuart Fotheringham, we suggest the 'IM figure between' mark is attributable to James Mitchell.

James Mitchell

James Mitchell worked in Edinburgh as a freeman and operated a shop that trained several apprentices.³ He was identified as a goldsmith in several contemporary documents including his own marriage documents of 1746.⁴ He was specified as a jeweller and goldsmith in the testament of his father-in-law, James Baillie;⁵ and a 'deceased goldsmith' at the time of his daughter Jean's marriage to James Stoddart, the Tollbooth parish merchant, on 15 July 1764;⁶ he was described as a deceased jeweller in his own testament dative filed in 1767.⁷ Furthermore, the years in which Mitchell worked in Edinburgh correspond to the known extant body of work carrying the 'IM figure between' mark. Additionally, Mitchell has no mark previously attributed to his work, and no other freeman in Edinburgh at that time with IM initials is lacking attributed marks.

There are two other Edinburgh goldsmiths with whom this mark has occasionally been associated: John Main and James Mitchelson.⁸ John Main (free 1729) was the last son of freeman George Main, to be apprenticed to his father.⁹ However, the figure-between mark could not have been Main's since he worked little in Edinburgh, leaving the city for Cadiz, Spain, in 1734.¹⁰ James Mitchelson, who



1 Mark of James Mitchelson, from a tablespoon, Edinburgh 1740/41. (Private collection. Photo: Janice M. Dietert (JMD))



2 Mark of James Mitchell, from a cream boat, Edinburgh 1740/41. (Private collection. Photo: JMD)



3 Second mark of James Mitchell, from a teapot, Edinburgh 1740/41. (National Museums of Scotland. Photo: JMD)



4 Mark of James Welsh, from a cruet frame, Edinburgh 1761/62. (National Museums of Scotland. Photo: JMD)

1 Thomas Burns, *Old Scottish Communion Plate*, Edinburgh 1892, p564; Wilfred J. Cripps, *Old English Plate: Ecclesiastical, Decorative and Domestic. Its Makers and Marks*, 9th edn, London 1906, p171; Ian Pickford (ed), *Jackson's Silver and Gold Marks*, Woodbridge 1987, pp548–49.

2 As note 1.

3 Apprentice Register 1694–1786, Incorporation of Goldsmiths of Edinburgh.

4 Henry Paton, *The Register of Marriages for the Parish of Edinburgh 1701–50*, Scottish Record Society, Edinburgh 1908 (in ScotsFind LLD website), p428.

5 Testament dative of James Baillie, Edinburgh Commissary Court (here-

after ECC), www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk (the official government source of genealogical data for Scotland), CC8/8/116, 22 January 1756, p1.

6 Henry Paton and Francis J. Grant, *The Register of Marriages for the Parish of Edinburgh 1595–1700*, (publ 1905) and 1755–1800 (publ 1922); combined documents, ScotsFind LLD website, p1862.

7 Testament Dative of James Mitchell, ECC (as note 5), CC8/8/117 29 March 1758, p1.

8 These freemen are the primary subjects of the article following, on p53 of this journal.

9 As note 3.

10 *ibid*, p100.

worked from 1706 through the mid-1750s, had a long and distinguished career overlapping the period in question. However, Mitchelson appears to have continued to use slight variations of the simple 'IM' block capital initials in a shaped shield until at least the mid-1740s.[fig 1]

Two variant punches of the mark we are attributing to James Mitchell are known. Fig 2 illustrates the first variant taken from a cream boat (1740/41), and has also been seen on a tablespoon (1749/51) and a sugar bowl (1750/51). It shows a man directly facing the viewer with his legs slightly apart. His right elbow is bent with his right hand angled across his body. A mallet is held upright in front of his chest. His left arm is stretched out horizontally to the side holding a bag in his left hand. The bag itself fits nicely into the crevice of the block capital M initial. One might visualise that this is a bag of gold or coins given its shape and size. The straight-legged pose of the man is decidedly one associated with confidence if not a certain swagger. The version of the mark illustrated in fig 3 is taken from a teapot (1740/41) and is also seen on a salver (1742/43). It features a male figure standing clearly toward the viewer's left in profile, knees bent, holding a mallet in his right hand and an object, possibly a bag with long draw strings or another object with a handle such as a basket in his left hand. With these marks apparently depicting a goldsmith, hammer in hand with a bag of coins or related craft object, the figure element seems more similar to shop advertising signs of the times than standard maker's marks. The only known mark resembling this one is Edinburgh's 'IW figure between' which, as we shall show, is not through coincidence but because it shares an important connection.

Mitchell was born about 1709–12, based on when he began his apprenticeship (1725)¹¹ and the fact that most apprentices were between 13 and 16 years of age when bound. His father was John Michell of Balbardie¹² who was most likely the John Mitchell of Balbardie, who was a burgher of Edinburgh and a macer to the Court of Sessions.¹³ His father apprenticed him to Robert Inglis, a freeman of the Incorporation of Goldsmiths of Edinburgh and the apprenticeship agreement was recorded on 19 August 1725.¹⁴

Inglis himself had a lengthy and significant career producing many fine wares. He took his first apprentice, James Gillespie, in 1686. In all Inglis took nine apprentices and James Mitchell was the last of these.¹⁵ James followed both David Mitchell and William Ged, two prominent eighteenth-century goldsmiths, as an Inglis trainee.

Mitchell's request for an essay was approved by the Incorporation on 26 February 1736. He was directed to prepare both a diamond ring and a plain gold ring to be made in the shop of David Mitchell. John Rollo and Hugh Penman were designated as his essay masters. Upon completion of these works and his oral essay, James Mitchell was admitted as a freeman of the Incorporation on 12 May 1736.¹⁶ Therefore, the first year in which he could mark his own wares should have been 1735/36; that corresponds well with the first appearance of the mark.

James Mitchell booked three apprentices during his career, which reflects the fact he was operating a shop producing at least a modest amount of silver. The first was James Welsh, on 10 October 1736,¹⁷ who was the only Mitchell apprentice to become a freeman in Edinburgh. Mitchell's other apprentices were John Fyatt (29

11 As note 3.

12 C.B.B. Watson, *Roll of Edinburgh Burgesses and Guild-Brethren 1406–1841*, Scottish Record Society, Edinburgh 1929, p736.

13 *ibid*, p736.

14 As note 3.

15 As note 3.

16 Minute Book,

Incorporation of Goldsmiths of Edinburgh, (hereafter Minutes) 1701–38. The 1736–37 Michaelmas Accounts, f21 (Treasurer George Forbes) lists the binding of James Welsh as prentice to James Mitchell with 15s 6d collected.

17 As note 3.



5 Teapot, James Mitchell, Edinburgh 1740/41 (National Museums of Scotland); cream boat, James Mitchell, Edinburgh 1740/41; sugar bowl, James Mitchell, Edinburgh 1750/51 (both private collections. Composite image: JMD)

November 1739) and William Murdoch (2 December 1748).¹⁸

On 6 April 1746 James Mitchell married Margaret Ballie, the only daughter of the late advocate, Mr James Ballie (died 1744).¹⁹

In the 1752 Gilhooley *Directory of Edinburgh*, James Mitchell is listed as a goldsmith at his own place near Anchor Close. The more detailed location description for his shop, based on the annuity tax list, is at 'High Street below Craig's Close'.²⁰ He was joined by three merchants, an ale seller and a vintner in this location near the Exchange Coffee House. An Incorporation Minutes entry of 12 August 1755 refers to 'the late James Mitchell'.²¹ Mitchell's death sometime during July of 1755 is confirmed in two testament datives. The first is his own testament dated 23 January 1767 and dealing with a debt in the form of a bond note.²² It lists his death as the '— day of July 1755'. The second testament dative is that of his father-in-law, James Baillie, dated 22 January 1756 where Mitchell's death date is also associated with July 1755.²³ On 30 July 1755 Mitchell's mother-in-law, Jean Baillie, was nominated and appointed as 'manager and Curatrice bonis' of James Mitchell's two surviving daughters, Jean and Margaret Mitchell.²⁴ It would seem that Mitchell's wife had either predeceased him or died in July 1755 as well.

As a result, the final possible year for items found with Mitchell's mark should be 1754/55 or possibly extending into 1755/56 as the business was brought to conclusion.

Mitchell's business seemed to be significant until his health deteriorated around 1752.²⁵ In our database there are wares covering the full range of manufacture but the last assay year represented is 1752/53. It appears likely that his production for 1753/54 and 1754/55 may have been minimal to non-existent. Nevertheless, during his productive years, James Mitchell produced the standard tea and table wares, as well as caster sets, cruets and candlesticks, specialty items not necessarily produced by every Edinburgh goldsmith of the period. Mitchell's work is of high quality reflecting the rococo tastes of the period. His tea wares were invariably of pleasing proportions; a composite tea service with all items bearing the 'IM figure between' maker's mark is illustrated.[fig 5]

18 As note 3.

19 Paton (as note 4) p428.

20 J. Gilhooley, *A Directory of Edinburgh 1752*, Edinburgh University Press 1988, p36.

21 Minutes 1738–68.

22 Testament dative of James Mitchell, ECC (as

note 5), CC8/8/120, 23 January 1767, pp1-3.

23 As note 5.

24 *ibid.* Jean Baillie was the daughter of John Aytoun of Kinaldie. She died on 30 March 1774 aged 97.

25 As note 21.

James Welsh

Since James Welsh was James Mitchell's first apprentice and the 'IW figure between' mark has been clearly attributed to him, it will help to understand his background and strengthen the connection between these two men. James Welsh was the son of John Welsh, burghess of Edinburgh.²⁶ Following his apprenticeship with Mitchell and a likely period as a journeyman, his request for an essay was approved on 13 September 1746.²⁷ The items he was to produce were a pair of buttons and a plain gold ring to be made in the shop of Alexander Campbell. Charles Dickson II and William Dempster were designated as his essay masters. Welsh was admitted as a freeman at a meeting of the Incorporation of Goldsmiths of Edinburgh on 13 November 1746.²⁸ He obtained his burghess ticket by right of his father, recorded on 11 February 1747.²⁹ Therefore, his first working year should be 1746/47, which is also the advent of the 'IW figure between' mark.

Welsh took three apprentices directly and inherited another two apprentices following the deaths of their former masters.³⁰ His first apprentice, James Jamieson, was booked on 11 March 1747, and was followed by Alexander Gordon on 20 November 1758. When George Forbes died, Welsh took on his apprentice, James Braidwood; the Incorporation approved the transfer of his indentures on 6 March 1759. The Incorporation approved the transfer of Alexander Stewart's indentures from the late James Campbell to Welsh on 29 May 1764. The booking of Welsh's last apprentice, Martin McKinnon, was recorded on 19 December 1764. Unfortunately, none of these apprentices became freemen in Edinburgh.

Welsh married Margaret Lowdon, the daughter of James Lowdon a merchant,³¹ who was originally from Leith but at the time of the marriage, on 20 November 1743, was from the north-west parish. Welsh is included in the *Directory* of 1752 as being a goldsmith at Kid's in Warriston Close.³² On 11 September 1756 Welsh was elected Deacon of the Incorporation in a contentious election requiring the aid of the vote of the retiring Deacon,³³ and he served in this post until 1758.³⁴

Welsh apparently moved his shop to Parliament Close, the address given in the *Williamson's Directory* of 1773-74.³⁵ In subsequent Williamson's directories he was listed as a jeweller in Parliament Square until 1780.³⁶ He was apparently a pensioner six years later when in 1786 the Incorporation Minutes recorded an objection to his voting rights.³⁷ In May of 1791 he received a present of charity from the Incorporation because he was in ill health.³⁸ His death must have come sometime within the next three years, because Welsh was not included in the *Aitchison Edinburgh Directory* of 1794-95.³⁹

Welsh's production as reflected in extant wares was modest, but his career fell during the post-Culloden period when many Edinburgh-trained apprentices either left for the colonies to pursue their trade or remained in Edinburgh as freemen but struggled in their businesses. His production seemed to focus on tea and table wares. *Fig 6* depicts a lovely rococo kettle and stand that shows how James Welsh could excel in his efforts, yet his talents were only rarely on display in the face of the four much larger firms of the 1760s and '70s: William Dempster, William Davie, Patrick Robertson and Alexander Gardner.



6 Tea kettle on stand with burner, James Welsh, Edinburgh 1755/56. (Christie's)

26 Watson (as note 12), p1103.

27 Minutes 1738-68.

28 *ibid.*

29 Watson (as note 12), p736.

30 Apprentice Register 1694-1786 (as note 3). Minutes 1738-68; Minutes 1768-89; Minutes 1789-1805. M Wood, *The Register of Apprentices of the City of Edinburgh 1756-1800*, Scottish Record Society, Edinburgh 1963.

31 Paton (as note 4), p649.

32 Gilhooley (as note 20), p54.

33 Minutes 1738-68.

34 *ibid.*

35 Peter Williamson, *Williamson's Directory for the City of Edinburgh*,

Canongate, Leith and Suburbs from the 25th May 1773 to 25th May 1774, Edinburgh 1773, p86.

36 Williamson (as note 35), June 1775-June 1776, p101; June 1778-June 1779, p106; June 1780-June 1781, p100.

37 Minutes 1768-89 and 1789-1805 (as note 30).

38 Minutes 1789-1805 (as note 30).

39 Thomas Aitchison, *A Directory for Edinburgh, Leith, Mussleburgh and Dalkeith: From July 1794-July 95*, R. Wilson, Edinburgh 1795.

40 Minutes (as note 16) 1738-68; 1768-89; 1789-1805.

41 National Galleries of Scotland, P 3104.

Since James Welsh trained no apprentices who continued as freemen in Edinburgh,⁴⁰ the figure-between makers' lineage ended in the late eighteenth century. The following list gives the training connection of Welsh to Daniel Crawford, with the dates of their freedom.

Daniel Crawford	1589
Thomas Cleghorne I	1606
Edward Cleghorne I	1649
Thomas Yorstoun	1673
Robert Inglis I	1686
James Mitchell I	1736
James Welsh	1746

Since Welsh was James Mitchell's only apprentice who became a freeman, it would seem that the general form of his mark of the 'IW figure between' may have been a recognition or tribute to that of his master. It features a standing human figure in between the block I and W initials.[fig 4] However, in this case, well-struck examples suggest that the figure is that of a woman probably wearing a bonnet and with a full floor-length skirt. Her right arm is bent and the hand resting near her waist. Her left arm is also bent with the forearm draped across the top of the W stabilising her stance. The pose is one of elegance and fashion no doubt reflecting Welsh's trade in not only silver but also jewellery. This is also

supported by his trade card, recently acquired by the National Galleries of Scotland which says he 'Makes & Sells all sort of Jeweller & Goldsmith work ... Gives the Highest Prices for Old Gold & Silver Jewels...';⁴¹ it depicts at least eight pieces of jewellery in addition to hollow-ware.

The master-apprentice relationship between Mitchell and Welsh would appear to serve as the basis for the novelty yet similarity of their marks. In terms of the original idea, it seems feasible that Mitchell may have been inspired by trade signs of the times in his apparent depiction of a goldsmith within the maker's mark.

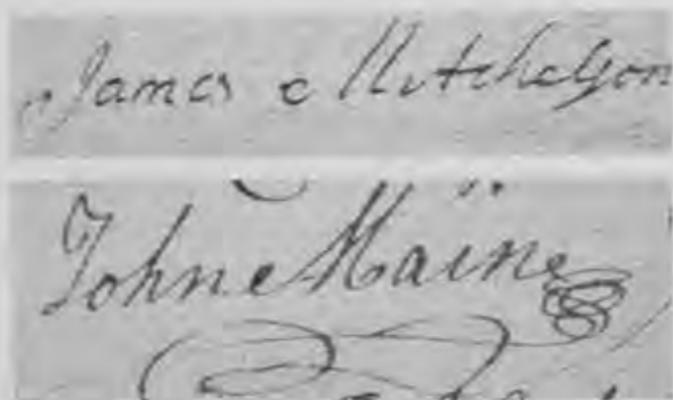
Acknowledgements

The authors are deeply indebted to Henry Steuart Fotheringham, Historian of the Incorporation of Goldsmiths of Edinburgh, for generously sharing his transcriptions, extracts and notes concerning the minutes and apprentice bookings of the Incorporation. These data were instrumental in the preparation of this article. We thank George Dalgleish, curator of the National Museums of Scotland for his generosity in providing information and photographs on Mitchell and Welsh pieces and marks. The assistance of Valerie Hunter, curator in the National Gallery of Scotland is greatly appreciated. We also thank Jeanne Sloane, of Christie's New York, and private collectors for the use of photographs in this article.

James Mitchelson – his legacy restored

RODNEY R. DIETERT AND JANICE M. DIETERT

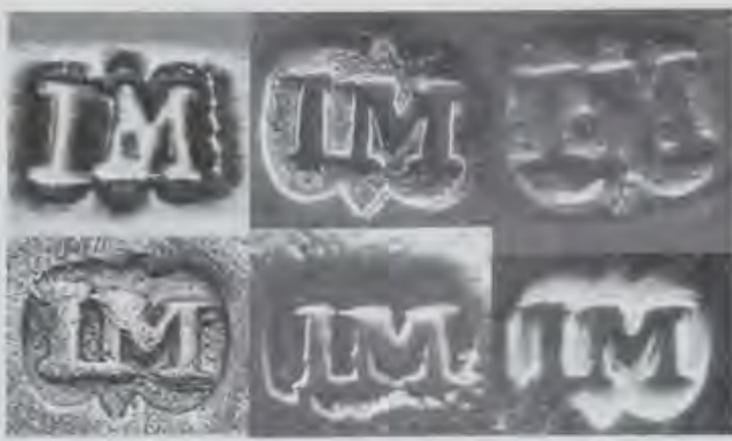
This article addresses the century-long confusion that has surrounded the attribution of eighteenth-century Edinburgh silver carrying the mark 'IM in a shaped shield'. This mark has been attributed either to James Mitchelson (free 1706)¹ or to John Main (free 1729)² depending upon the year of assay.



¹ Signatures of James Mitchelson and John Main, from the Minute Books for 31 May 1706 and 24 June 1729 respectively. (Incorporation of Goldsmiths of Edinburgh. Photo: Jancie M. Dietert (JMD))

¹ Minute Books, Incorporation of Goldsmiths of Edinburgh,

(hereafter Minutes) 1701–38. ² Minutes 1701–38.



2 Examples of the IM mark attributable to James Mitchelson.

From, left to right, top row: 1717/18 tablespoon, 1725/26 kettle tray, 1725/26 kettle stand (same ensemble); bottom row: 1729/30 mug, 1736/37 waiter, 1739/40 salver. (National Museums of Scotland and two private collections. Photos: JMD)

Jackson, as well as Brook and Cripps, assign essentially the same 'IM in a shaped shield' mark first to James Mitchelson, then later in the eighteenth century to John Main.³ Fig 2 illustrates a series of the marks in question. There is a slight variation in the punches, some of which include a pellet between the initials and variation in the relative flatness of the shield itself, but the mark is essentially the same over the decades. The designations for the mark arose from the need to assign a mark to John Main, with the reasonable assumption that two decades was sufficient to account for Mitchelson's working period. As a result, during the whole of the twentieth century, Edinburgh silver made and marked from 1706 to 1728 has been routinely designated as the work of James Mitchelson, while anything marked between 1729 and the 1740s has usually been attributed to John Main. Highly important pieces are found from both periods and interestingly both goldsmiths were apprenticed to the same master, George Main. However, it is our contention that this anomalous attribution prevented the proper recognition and appreciation of the entire second half of James Mitchelson's lengthy career as an Edinburgh goldsmith.

This article will place Mitchelson's career in a different perspective by illustrating that the impressive range of silver found in public and private collections that is attributed to both James Mitchelson and John Main was almost certainly made by Mitchelson alone. To establish this, we will present the evidence indicating that John Main could not have made much, if any, of the silver presently attributed to him and then describe the association of Mitchelson's career with this particular mark.

John Main

John Main (born 1699)⁴ was the fourth and youngest son to be apprenticed (booked 10 May 1714 along with his elder brother George)⁵ to his father, George Main, and the only one to become a freeman of the Incorporation of Goldsmiths in Edinburgh.⁶ The other brothers, Robert and James, did not become freemen. This may be due to the fact that the Mains seemed to have earned their living more from other ventures linked to shipping and trade than through the manufacture of silver.

The association of John Main with business initiatives outside the Edinburgh goldsmith trade began with his father. George Main also made very little silver and within the trade may have focused more on jewellery, rather than hollow-ware and flatware. For example, Robert Inglis and George Main had nearly parallel careers, their births and deaths occurring about the same time. They were apprenticed to the same master and were granted freedom about a year apart, yet for the years 1686/87 through 1693/94, the assayed output of George Main stood in stark contrast to that of Robert Inglis. During this period, George Main only sent 17 parcels of silver weighing a total of 373oz for assay. Meanwhile, Robert Inglis sent 153 parcels of silver weighing a total of 8,465oz during those same years. Furthermore, George Main sent no silver for assay from 1694/95 through 1701/02, while Robert Inglis sent over 8,600oz.⁷

George Main became the postmaster for Scotland about 1701⁸ and began using his shop as the national post office with some financial success.⁹ He received a stipend for this and had several paid office staff as well as paid mail carriers; in addition he was involved in operating other regional post offices across Scotland.¹⁰ This must

3 Ian Pickford (ed), *Jackson's Silver and Gold Marks*, Woodbridge 1987, pp545-47 (hereafter Pickford); Thomas Burns, *Old Scottish Communion Plate*, Edinburgh 1892, pp560, 562. W.J. Cripps, *Old English Plate: Ecclesiastical, Decorative and Domestic: Its Makers and Marks*, 9th edn, London 1906.

4 Parish of Edinburgh Records, New Register House GROS #685/01 0013.

5 Apprentice Register 1694-1786, Incorporation of Goldsmiths of Edinburgh, no431.

6 Minutes 1701-38.

7 Incorporation of Goldsmiths of Edinburgh, Assay Master's Accounts 1681/82 to 1701/02.

8 National Archives of Scotland (hereafter NAS), Tackmen's Accounts: George Main, postmaster 11 Nov 1701-11 Nov 1702 NAS E89/5.

9 Domestic Annals of Scotland, Reign of Queen Anne part 5, 30 November 1710.

10 NAS, Letter from George Main postmaster to the Duke of Hamilton 17 Sept 1702, NASGD 406/14/490. Letter from George Main postmaster to the Earl of Mar 14 Aug 1707, NASGD 124/5/664.

have taken a considerable amount of his time and attention, and such continuing responsibilities may explain why he declined the office of the Incorporation Deacon in 1710 because of obligations on behalf of the crown.¹¹ While George Main clearly had the capability to manufacture silver, it seems that he focused on other business opportunities.

After his death in October 1739 only two daughters, Ann and Christian, were designated as executors of the testament dative.¹² None of his sons was mentioned. Christian Main went on to marry the famous golfer, surgeon and Jacobite sympathiser, John Rattray in 1742.¹³ George Main invested heavily in Governor & Company, the British East Indies trading firm, and the family fortune seems to have been linked to trade.¹⁴ Indeed, the cautioner associated with his testament was a wine merchant, Capt. Hugh Clerk.¹⁵

As a freeman in Edinburgh (elected 24 June 1729)¹⁶ John Main is likely to have produced mainly jewellery and small items such as spoons. Additionally, he may have relied on supplies from other goldsmiths for at least some of his wares. On two occasions during 1733, John Rollo, a fellow freeman goldsmith, sold him loose diamond stones as well as spoons, charging Main for the making of the spoons.¹⁷ John Main was on the short list (three candidates) for Incorporation Deacon in both September 1732 and 1733.¹⁸ However, Hugh Gordon was elected both years instead. Main virtually disappeared from the Incorporation minutes following the second election.

During his Edinburgh career, John Main booked only one apprentice, David Falconer, the son of George Falconer, an accountant with the Bank of Scotland, with the indenture dated 12 November 1731 and approved the following day.¹⁹ However, just a few years later, at George Falconer's request, members of the Incorporation approved the transfer of this indenture to James Ker, then deacon.²⁰ According to the apprentice records, on 'the Seventeenth day of Aprill Jajvij and thirty five years' David Falconer transferred to James Ker

The Which Day the Incorporation being mett and haveing considered a Letter from John Main Jeweler dated at Cadiz in Spain, 31st Aug^t last notifeing that he is not to return to this place and a desire of haveing his Apprentices Settled with some other master of the trade Geo: Falconer, one of the Accountants of the Bank of Scotland, to have his son David Falconer late Apprentice to the said John Main by Indenture dated at Edin^r 12th Nov^r 1731 Transferred Apprentice to James Ker jeweler present Deacon of their Incorporation And also that it is the Desire of the said David Falconer...[signed] Ro^{tt} Inglis Clk.²¹

The members considered the letter and request and approved it. George Falconer 'instantly paid in the Thesr four pounds Scots for the use of the poor and six shilling Scots to the Magdalen Chapelle'.²²

Indeed, the approval of the transfer by the Incorporation members suggested that Main was not continuing any craft activity in Edinburgh. Generally transfers of apprentices were not approved, even when widows who were continuing their late husband's business had very little business to keep the apprentice active. John Main may have made only a small amount of silver for a brief period during the 1730s; his surviving work, if any, must be scant and his mark (if he had one) rare.

John Main was a member of the Royal Company of Archers;²³ he

11 Minutes (as note 1), 1701-38.

12 Edinburgh Commissary Court (hereafter ECC), Testament dative of George Main, www.scotlandspople.gov.uk (the official government source of genealogical data for Scotland), CC8/8/101.

13 Register of the Episcopal Congregation - Leith 1733-75.

14 ECC (as note 12).

15 *ibid.*

16 Minutes (as note 1), 1701-38.

17 NAS, Ledger Book of John Rollo, goldsmith 1731-37, NASRH 2/8/27.

18 Minutes (as note 1), 1701-38.

19 Apprentice Register 1694-1786 (as note 5), p7.

20 *ibid.*, p100.

21 *ibid.*

22 *ibid.*

23 James B. Paul, *The History of the Royal Company of Archers Edinburgh*, William Blackwood 1875, p353.

24 Paul (as note 23), p326.

won the fifteenth annual competition of late spring-summer 1734.²⁴ Therefore, Main's departure from Edinburgh most likely occurred sometime between May and August of that year making 1733/34 his final assay year. The notes of Mr Stuart Maxwell of private accounts for Edinburgh goldsmiths noted only one account concerning John Main, that from an Isle of Skye patron in 1733. Certainly, no-one would expect that the impressive array of urns, kettles, candlesticks, communion cups and teapots bearing the 'IM in a shaped shield' mark, and appearing after 1728, were made by this freeman.



3 *Maker's mark IM or WI, possibly for John Main or William Jamieson, the mark taken from a teaspoon Edinburgh 1732/33. (National Museums of Scotland (MEQ 121). Photo: JMD)*

Does John Main's mark exist among extant work? While we cannot answer this question with any certainty, we do illustrate a different and unattributed mark – IM or WI mark with somewhat crude initials (the I lacks serifs) within a simple oval.[fig 3] This single example falls within the narrow window in which the John Main mark might be seen. However, it should be noted that the mark designated in Jackson for William Jamieson is of concern, since it is essentially the James Mitchelson mark inverted 180 degrees. Therefore, Jamieson's possible mark might still need an association as well. The plain IM or WI mark in an oval, while feasible, would require further investigation before any attribution could be made to either John Main or William Jamieson.

James Mitchelson

In contrast with Main's brief career as an Edinburgh jeweller-goldsmith, James Mitchelson had one of the longest tenures of any freeman during the Incorporation's history. James Mitchelson was probably born in 1684 or 1685 to John Mitchelson of Middleton²⁵ and a daughter of Sir John Veitch of Dawick.²⁶ He had at least one brother, Samuel, who was Minister in the parish of Lynn at his death as well as a sister, Elizabeth, spouse of Alexander Horsburgh.²⁷ Many of the extended Mitchelson of Middleton family were ministers, writers or advocates. James was probably related to Thomas Cleghorne III, Edinburgh goldsmith and deacon, via a marriage in 1701. Cleghorne's second wife was Isobel, daughter of John Mitchelson of Middleton.²⁸

James Mitchelson was apprenticed to the freeman goldsmith, George Main, and the indenture was booked on 25 May 1696.²⁹ After the seven-year period of apprenticeship and three years as a journeyman, Mitchelson requested his essay on 26 March 1706, which included a diamond rose ring and a gold seal set with a carnelian.³⁰ He obtained his burgess ticket by right of his father, John Mitchelson elder of Middleton on 29 May

1706³¹ and was admitted as a freeman of the Incorporation on 31 May 1706.³²

Mitchelson married Agnes Crosbie, daughter of John Crosbie of Holme in Dumfries-shire in 1716.³³ They had at least five children, Mary, John, James, Andrew and Samuel.³⁴ Samuel went on to become Clerk to the Incorporation of Goldsmiths shortly after his father's death.³⁵ James became a jeweller in London and was granted an Edinburgh burgess ticket by an Act of the Council in 1751.³⁶

As a freeman, James Mitchelson was among the top five per cent of Edinburgh masters in number of apprentices booked. He booked at least 14 apprentices,³⁷ the first of which, Andrew Pringle, was booked on 21 January 1708. His last apprentice was John Deas who was booked on 17 July 1755. The transfer of Deas from James Mitchelson to former Mitchelson apprentice, John Robertson, was approved by Incorporation members in September 1758 following Mitchelson's death.³⁸ Among the Mitchelson trainees was the superb rococo craftsman and Jacobite supporter, Ebenezer Oliphant. Mitchelson was still practising as a goldsmith when Deas was booked in 1755.

James Mitchelson was listed in the 1752 Edinburgh *Directory* as a goldsmith at his own place in Milne's Court.³⁹ In addition, he served in the post of Trade Councillor during the 1751–52 City Council term.⁴⁰ Between 1754 and his death, Mitchelson bought the Wrychtis-Housis property in Edinburgh that formerly had belonged to the Napier family. This property later passed to the Governors of the Trades' Maiden Hospital in 1762.⁴¹

In his testament dative of 1758, James Mitchelson was still owed payment for 'account of jeweller and goldsmith works' from Alistair Fraser Esq of Fraserdale.⁴² Additionally, private account records⁴³ indicate that at least one prominent titled patron had accounts with Mitchelson as late as 1755. As before, this strongly suggests that James Mitchelson was making silver until very near his death. If, as we contend, Mitchelson continued to make silver after 1729 while training Ebenezer Oliphant, John Robertson and other apprentices, then the simplest explanation is that he continued to use the same IM in a shaped shield mark at least until it disappeared about the mid- to late 1740s.

If the silver work carrying this mark is viewed in total as the work of a single goldsmith, it acquires a much greater significance. Mitchelson's early output was impressive and included a pair of standing secular cups,[fig 4] several early teapots of various forms, cast candlesticks, octagonal casters, one of the earliest known Scottish kettles (1725/26), an early egg-shaped urn (1724/25), as well as some of the first curved spouts on teapots and everted wavy borders on sugar bowls. Among the post-1729 pieces are the famous Lord Lovett snuff mull of circa 1746, several tea urns, numerous



4 Pair of standing cups, James Mitchelson, Edinburgh 1724/25. (Asprey Ltd)

spherical teapots, an early three-footed sugar bowl⁴⁴ several double-lipped sauceboats and, most significantly, a kettle, lamp and tray set that was clearly designed to be attached to a silver table.[fig 5] This appears to be the only known Scottish silver table ensemble. It seems likely that James Mitchelson would have to be viewed among the most noted eighteenth-century Edinburgh masters, along with James Ker, William Aytoun, Colin McKenzie, and Henry Bethune.

If Mitchelson may lay claim to the IM in a shaped shield mark from 1706 onwards, its disappearance after the mid-1740s presents a remaining maker's mark dilemma that requires further examination. As previously mentioned, several lines of evidence suggest Mitchelson continued manufacturing silver until near his death. At least one hypothesis is that the mark, IM in an engrained rectangular punch [fig 6] attributed by Jackson⁴⁵ to James McKenzie I (free 1747)⁴⁶ might actually be a continuation mark for the last decade of James Mitchelson's career. The evidence supporting this is the observation that the IM in a rectangle does not correspond well to McKenzie's working period and has only been seen to date on pieces marked between the years of 1748/49 to 1756/57.⁴⁷ Instead, this time-frame corresponds well with the missing Mitchelson years.

James McKenzie I worked well into the 1770s.⁴⁸ Therefore, his mark must be represented in the later decades. One suggestion is



5 Tea kettle on stand with burner and tea table, James Mitchelson, Edinburgh 1736/37, the only known example bearing Scottish marks. The central fitment on the underside of the salver (or tea table) would have fitted a now lost stand. (National Museums of Scotland, MEQ 638 and 639)



25 C.B.B. Watson, *Roll of Edinburgh Burgesses and Guild Brethren 1406-1841*, Scottish Record Society, Edinburgh 1929, p739.

26 *ibid.*

27 ECC, testament dative of Samuel Mitchelson, *Scotlandspeople* (as note 12), CC8/8/98.

28 Henry Paton, *The Register of Marriages for the Parish of Edinburgh 1701-50*, Scottish Record Society, Edinburgh 1908 (in

Scotfind LLD website) p126.

29 Apprentice Register 1694-1786 (as note 5), entry 319 continuing from Section B.

30 Minutes (as note 1) 1701-38.

31 Roll of Burgesses (as note 25) p739.

32 Minutes (as note 1) 1701-38.

33 Edinburgh Marriage Registers (as note 28) p431.

34 Edinburgh Parish Records, *Scotlandspeople* (as note 12), 685/01/0016, 0017, 0019

35 Minutes (as note 1) 1738-68.

36 Roll of Burgesses (as note 25) p739.

37 Apprentice Register 1694-1786 (as note 5).

38 Minutes (as note 1) 1738-68.

39 J. Gilhooley, *A Directory of Edinburgh*, Edinburgh 1752, Edinburgh University

Press, 1988, pp36, 59.

40 Gilhooley (as note 39), pXI.

41 John Geddie, 'Wrychtis-Housis', in *The book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, vol 4, T. & A. Constable, Edinburgh 1911, p6.

42 ECC, testament dative of James Mitchelson, *Scotlandspeople* (as note 12), CC8/8/117.

43 Mr Stuart Maxwell's notes on private accounts

for James Mitchelson.

44 John Hyman Collection, Colonial Williamsburg.

45 Pickford (as note 3), p548.

46 Minutes (as note 1), 1738-68.

47 Rodney Dietert and Janice Dietert, *Compendium of Scottish Silver*, Internet First Press, Ithaca 2006.

48 Minute Books, Incorporation of Goldsmiths of Edinburgh.



6 Maker's mark IM, doublestruck, attributed by Jackson to James McKenzie I, but possibly the mark used by James Mitchelson during his last decade of work, (from a table-spoon, Edinburgh 1749/50).



7 Maker's mark MK, unattributed, possibly used by James McKenzie I during the 1760s, (tablespoon, Edinburgh 1766/67).

A wider range of dated examples of both marks is needed to resolve this puzzle. (Private collection. Photos: JMD)

that his mark might be one previously unattributed and apparently not recorded by Jackson. One mark, MK conjoined in an oval [fig 6], has been found on several pieces dating from the 1760s, including an impressive salver. This mark has certain similarities with that of Kenneth McKenzie, James McKenzie I's father and master. However, additional information will be required to sort out Mitchelson and McKenzie marks of circa 1748–57.

Given just the historical data gathered, we feel certain the 'IM in a shaped shield' maker's mark belongs to James Mitchelson. Very simply, John Main left Edinburgh for Cadiz, Spain, in the summer of 1734 and apparently left the Edinburgh goldsmiths' trade. James Mitchelson's maker's mark began in 1706 and continued with little alteration until the mid-1740s. Furthermore, Mitchelson's career prospered into the 1750s. This is a Scottish goldsmith who had an uncommonly long career and made exceptional pieces, whether executing elegant Queen Anne candlesticks or refined rococo kettles designed to repose on silver tables. Hopefully, the wonderful legacy of silver work produced by this Edinburgh goldsmith may now be viewed with a new appreciation.

The authors' research on Scottish silver is published as a searchable pdf file, available as a printed version on demand:

<http://www.scottishsilverarchives.com>

<http://dspace.library.cornell.edu/handle/1813/3026>

<http://dspace.library.cornell.edu/handle/1813/3027>

Acknowledgements

We are particularly grateful to Henry Steuart Fotheringham, Historian of the Edinburgh Incorporation of Goldsmiths and George Dalgleish, curator, National Museums of Scotland, without whose help this article would not have been possible. Their generous sharing of notes, records, marks and photographs greatly facilitated this study. We also thank the National Museums of Scotland, the Edinburgh Incorporation of Goldsmiths and Asprey, London, for access to records, marks and/or use of images in this article.

CHECKLIST (marks not to scale)

Mark	Years Seen (to date)*	Edinburgh Freeman
 IM or WI oval	1732/33-1734/35	John Main or William Jamieson (both free 1729)
 IM shield	1709/10-1746/47	James Mitchelson (free 1706, died 1757)
 IM engrailed rectangle	1748/49-1756/57	James Mitchelson (last decade) or James McKenzie I
 MK conjoined oval	1763/64-1769/70	probably James McKenzie I (free 1747, died circa 1775)
 IM figure between	1735/36-1752/53	James Mitchell (free 1736, ill 1752, died 1755)
 IW figure between	1746/47-1783/84	James Welsh (free 1747, ill 1788, died 1791-94)

*Based on examples in Rodney Dietert and Janice Dietert, *Compendium of Scottish Silver*, Internet-First University Press, Ithaca 2006.

Nonconformist silver in England

ANN EATWELL AND CLARE BARRY

Given the interest of historians in the silver of other faiths and denominations, particularly Anglican plate, it is surprising that so little attention has been given to the subject of Nonconformist silver. The key text, *The Vestiges of Protestant Dissent*, was published in 1897 by George E. Evans. There were few illustrations. In 1905 two short but useful illustrated articles appeared by the silver specialist E. Alfred Jones.¹ George E. Evans revisited the subject but without illustrations in the *Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society* in 1927, concentrating on Unitarian plate survival.² No evaluation has been published since that date and it is hardly surprising that the lack of information and understanding of the subject has led to the disappearance of some examples and the mistaken interpretation of others.³[fig 1]

Because of the lack of information available, reconstructing the history of the subject was daunting. One display case of Nonconformist silver had been in the church plate galleries of the Victoria and Albert Museum. It was created in 1975 possibly as a result of a lecture on the subject given by Christopher Stell in 1974 to the Society of Antiquaries. The objects were simply labelled with no analysis or explanation. They had been borrowed from a number of sources but the selection appeared to have been a matter of serendipity. Were these articles typical of Nonconformist communion silver? How could we discover this? A lucky find in the Council of the Care of Churches' library, a typed copy of Christopher Stell's 1974 lecture, allowed more progress to be made.⁴ The first task for the authors of this article was to use the evidence of the lecture to trace the silver and create a visual record. Over 30 years later did the silver still survive? Our parameters were ambitious given the research time available. We sought out examples from all over the country, from all denominations, from the 1660s to the twentieth century and of all the main types of vessel known, focusing almost exclusively on communion silver, apart from object types that had an especial use in Nonconformist congregations, such as communion tokens. As some denominations like Baptists, or smaller congregations, were often too poor to own silver or held objections to the use of showy, expensive materials, pewter, glass and ceramics were used and are featured here to add to the understanding of the practice of Nonconformists. Although our survey is by no means complete, and the documentary evidence is often elusive, we think we will be able to draw some useful conclusions.

As an introduction to the subject of Nonconformist silver, a very brief resumé of the history of Nonconformity is required. Protestant dissatisfaction with the teachings, ceremony and organisation of the Established Church in England, and persecution by the authorities, prompted some dissenters in the late sixteenth and early seven-



1 Gloucester: Independent, later Congregational. One mug from a set of four, John Sutton, London 1702/03. Made for use of the congregation soon after the meeting-house was built in about 1700. (Gloucester Museums)

1 George Eyre Evans, *The Vestiges of Protestant Dissent*, 1897; E. Alfred Jones, 'Some Old Silver Communion Plate of English Nonconformity' part 1, pp280-85 and part 2, pp371-74, *Magazine of Fine Arts*, 1905.

2 George Eyre Evans, 'Our Communion Plate and Other Treasures', *Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society*, (Walter H. Burgess ed) vol 4:1-7,2, The Lindsey Press, London 1927.

3 For example, four silver mugs have recently been returned to Gloucester but in the sale catalogue the auction house commented on the engraved inscription 'Independent Meeting Gloucester' that no trace

meetings were known in Gloucester; Christie's London, 15 June 2004. See Anthony Sale, 'Four Nonconformist communion cups for Gloucester', *Silver Studies*, no19 2005 p78; and Sale, 'Four Nonconformist Communion Cups', *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, vol 123, 2005, pp143-47.

4 Christopher Stell, *Nonconformist Communion Plate*, typescript of a lecture read to the Society of Antiquaries, London, 21 February 1974. A copy of the typescript has been deposited in the Metalwork Department Library, Victoria and Albert Museum by permission of the author.

2 Walpole, Suffolk. Exterior of the Walpole chapel, converted to a meeting-house in the late seventeenth century – once a timber-framed farmhouse.



Baptist: The first congregation was formed in Holland in 1609. 'Believers' Baptism and total immersion in water were generally required. Two groups united in 1813 as the Baptist General Union.

Congregational: Initially known as **Independents**, opposed to Charles I, the movement began in the late sixteenth century. The Pilgrim Fathers were part of this movement. By 1832 the Congregational Union of England and Wales was formed by representatives of Independent churches (see below).

Methodism: John Wesley (1703–91) began preaching widely in 1739. In 1784 he formed a Conference with, for example, authority to appoint preachers. 'Methodical' weekly 'classes' were prominent. The importance of Baptism and Holy Communion was confirmed in 1795. Various secessions took place but a strong social conscience was retained.

Presbyterianism: Became influential in England by 1572, having been supported in 1560 by John Knox (1505–72) in Scotland, a student of John Calvin. By the nineteenth century, along with rapid growth, some English congregations had become Unitarian in doctrine (see below).

Unitarianism: A Unitarian congregation was formed in London in 1774. Joseph Priestley played an important role. Difficulties over endowments arose over 'free churches' that became Unitarian. The General Assembly of Unitarian & Free Christian Churches was formed in 1929 out of an earlier association. Each congregation is independent. Unitarians reject the Trinity and the divinity of Jesus Christ.

United Reformed Church: was formed in 1972 by the union of the Congregational Church in England and Wales and the English Presbyterian Church. The Congregational Union of Scotland joined in 2000. [The Continuing Congregational Federation was formed of those who disapproved of this step.]

teenth century to find freedom of worship abroad in the Netherlands and America. Other groups remained and after the brief respite of Cromwell's protectorate continued to worship together in secret, especially after the Act of Uniformity of 1662. This is the date traditionally given for the formal beginning of Nonconformity. The Act required the use of the *Book of Common Prayer* and a declared allegiance to Anglican bishops. Radical clergy and their congregations were unable to comply and almost 2,000 ministers left parish churches for discreet worship in cottages and barns. Further restrictions made gatherings of small numbers of people illegal, especially within five miles of a town, with fines and imprisonment if proof could be brought before the courts of an 'illegal conventicle'. It is hardly surprising that few written records from these communities survive for the period before the Toleration Act of 1689. The reign of William and Mary brought greater tolerance and the Act itself gave dissenters freedom to worship while keeping them outside the mainstream of national life.⁵[fig 2]

Most of the early purpose-built meeting-houses date from the end of the seventeenth century.[fig 4] It has been estimated that by 1715 there were about 550 Presbyterian congregations, 300 Independent and 250 Baptist, with 250,000 attendees.⁶ During the eighteenth century the rise of evangelism and the establishment of Methodism revived and challenged Nonconformists, who had lost zeal but gained respectability. John Wesley's preachers took Nonconformity into the countryside where it had never held as much influence as in the towns. Saving souls became as important as individual conscience and freedom. The Anglican church at the time was less appealing with cold sermons, no lay participation, absence of emotion and clergy who lacked the conviction of the Nonconformist preachers. Many people attended both established and Nonconformist churches in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for reasons of expediency and faith. Marriages could not be held legally in Nonconformist chapels between 1753 and 1836 and holding some public offices was barred to protestant dissenters for many years. A curate in Skegness, Lincolnshire was told by one of his congregation: 'We comes to church in the morning to please you, sir, and goes to chapel at night to save our souls.'⁷

Nonconformist chapels had always been centred around preach-



3 *Old Meeting, Norwich, 1693: Independent, later Congregationalist.*

ers. Early congregations followed their clergy into secret meetings or exile and later appointed their own preachers as they rejected the hierarchy of Anglican episcopacy. Hearing and preaching the word of God took precedence over the practice of public worship. The famous Baptist preacher Charles Spurgeon often preached to audiences of 10,000 people around 1856–59. Communion, though regularly practised, usually once a month until the middle of the twentieth century, would have been open to smaller numbers of any given Nonconformist congregation. Most of the larger numbers of 'hearers' referred to in documents were not full members of the congregation. A careful examination was necessary by the minister into an applicant's spiritual and moral suitability for chapel membership. Communion tokens certified the member's right to attend communion at a particular meeting or chapel. The importance of the communion service as a memorial of the Last Supper and an act of fellowship within the Nonconformist community can be shown by the placing of the communion table below but in front of the pulpit, facing the congregation at the front of the meeting-house. These two items, pulpit and table, provided the visual focus for the Nonconformist service.⁸ In wealthy chapels the large, carved and

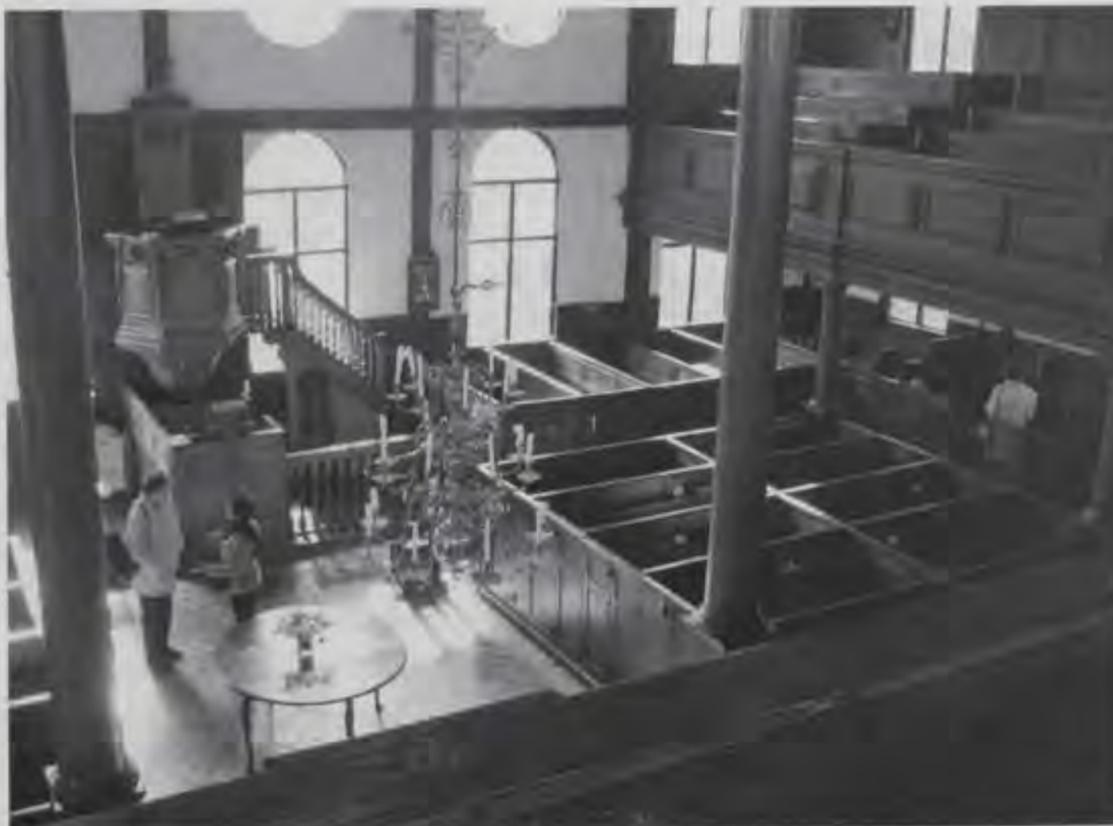
Episcopacy: Government by bishops.

Congregationalism: Each congregation manages its own affairs.

Presbyterianism: governance by ministers and elders (generally seen as a lay rank) chosen by congregational election.

Act of Uniformity 1662: Required the use of the *Book of Common Prayer* and episcopal ordination.

Act of Toleration 1689: Granted freedom of worship to Nonconformists but did not include Catholics and Unitarians. Until 1828 all Nonconformists were excluded from holding civil or military office and prevented from being awarded degrees by Oxford and Cambridge universities.



4 *Ipswich Unitarian meeting-house, interior, officially opened 1700.*

5 For general information on the history of Nonconformity see Michael R. Watts, *The Dissenters* vol II, *The Expansion of Evangelical Nonconformity*, 1995; Paul Sangster, *A History of the Free Churches*, 1983; F.L. Cross (ed), and E.A. Livingstone (ed 3rd edn), *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, Oxford University Press, 1997.

6 Alan Rushton, *My Ancestors were English*

Presbyterians or Unitarians, Society of Genealogists Enterprises Ltd, 2001, p4. Probably compiled from John Evans' *List of Dissenting Congregations*, 1715. Manuscript held at the Dr Williams's Library, London.

7 Watts (as note 5), p114.

8 John Harvey, *The Art of Piety: The visual Culture of Welsh Nonconformity*, University of Wales Press, 1995.



5 York St Saviourgate: English Presbyterian now Unitarian. Flagon, Peter & Jonathan Bateman, London, 1790/91; communion plates, maker's mark TL, London 1671/72 or 1673/74. Engraved 'The gift of Andrew Taylor 1696'; communion cups, maker's mark RG, London 1694/95. (On loan to York Cathedral Treasury)



6 London, Eagle Street: Baptist. Two-handled cups, I. Vickers, and flagon, pewter, circa 1760.



7 Framlingham: English Presbyterian now Unitarian. Two-handled cup, tin glazed earthenware, Staffordshire, circa 1780.



8 Methodist chapel. Two-handled cup, glass, circa 1860, perhaps used for a Methodist Love Feast. (With permission of the Trustees of Wesley's Chapel, City Road, London)



9 Halifax, North Gate End: English Presbyterian now Unitarian. Two-handled cup, Henry Chawner, London 1792/93.

ornamented pulpit was the most prepossessing fitting of the interior. The silver communion plate was central to carrying out the communion service, but was it considered of any importance in itself?

Our examination of Nonconformist silver begins by looking at the choices that the congregations appear to have made in terms of materials, types, shapes and decoration of their communion vessels from the evidence of the surviving objects. As the communion was a service of remembrance, not a Roman Catholic Eucharist, and Nonconformists placed spiritual salvation above preoccupation with worldly goods, the vessels themselves did not need to be made of precious materials. The bread and wine were not transformed during the service nor could they be reserved or adored. They had meaning only in use, so only the simplest equipment was necessary: the communion cup for wine, a communion dish for bread and sometimes a flagon or a similar object for refilling the cups.[fig 5] Although alms were regularly given to the poor, there is no evidence of a special dish for the collections, as in the Anglican church.

Unlike other denominations such as the Anglican church and the Church of Scotland, there was no specific guidance about the type or form of communion vessels for use in Nonconformist meeting-houses.⁹ The communion vessels were undoubtedly chosen, as well as given, to meet the aspirations of the individual Nonconformist communities.[fig 6] Some may have favoured plain, unmaterialistic simplicity in the choice of material while others sought the more expensive status of silver. Much of the surviving silver is from the English Presbyterian communities whose members were often of a higher merchant or land-owning class, richer and of greater social standing than Nonconformists of other denominations. They would have been used to using silver at home. Surprisingly silver appears to have been desired even when it could not be afforded; pewter, ceramics, glass and in the nineteenth century electroplate, were substituted. The St Andrew's Street Baptist Church in Cambridge in 1762 recorded in their church book that

the church should purchase two cups and three plates: and whereas the church was too poor to afford plate, however desirable for the credit of religion, on which we should put even the best outside appearance that consisted with decency; that pewter cups and plates should be purchased.

The two pewter cups and three plates cost 11s 6d. Although the congregation had members who were farmers, shoemakers, millers and carpenters, by far the greatest number were labourers or servants.¹⁰

Silver, perhaps valued more within the congregations, has survived in larger quantities than other materials. It cannot as yet be proved conclusively that it was acquired in preference to other materials, but as the St Andrew's Street Baptist Church example demonstrates, silver was considered to be a first choice. No doubt to pragmatic Nonconformist congregations metals such as pewter and silver may also have been perceived as more practical than fragile ceramics and glass.[fig 7]

Very little ceramics and glass survive for what must have been a more common practice of communion use. Once dissociated from the congregation there would be very little to distinguish the pieces from similar domestic vessels. The large group of ceramic and glass items used in the Love Feast, brought together by the Museum of Methodism, may give some indication of a wider use of ceramics and glass.[fig 8]



10 *First Church of Christ, Connecticut: Congregational. Two-handled cups, Jeremiah Dummer, David Jesse, William Cowell, Boston circa 1670-1715. (Sotheby's)*

In terms of shape, the two-handled cup is the overwhelming preference in Nonconformist communities of all denominations, all over the country and from the seventeenth to the early nineteenth century. It was even taken to America with the religious exiles.[fig 10] At the very beginning, the shape is of squat porringer-like form but it evolves as the fashionable design for the two-handled cup changes, until by the late eighteenth century it is that of an urn-shaped racing cup.[fig 9] There are a number of theories which might explain the dominance of the form in Nonconformist use. Looking more generally at the communion plate found in Nonconformist congregations (two-handled cups, beakers, wine cups, tankards, plates and mugs), it might be concluded that Nonconformists deliberately chose vessels that already had a domestic context.[fig 11] By doing so they could distance themselves from the equipment used in the Anglican church. The value of this idea is somewhat diminished by the known use of two-handled cups, beakers, tankards and mugs in the Established Church.¹¹ The use was not always approved of. The church at Oakley Magna in Suffolk received a demand in 1683 that 'the pewter tankard that is for the use of the communion ... be changed for a fflagon'.¹² It would have been an advantage in the more dangerous times of early dissent to use objects that could be easily mistaken for household goods if meetings were taking place in members' houses. None of the objects look as if they have a specifically religious purpose. There may also be an argument for the deliberate use of domestic forms as a symbol of the renewed power and authority of the laity within the Nonconformist congregation. However the persistence of the two-handled cup form long after secrecy was no longer an issue, may point to a different rationale.¹³

It is difficult to identify the factors behind the original choice of communion plate. The problem for any researcher looking at the period before the 1690s is that the persecution of Nonconformists has meant that few documents or objects survive to create a clear understanding of the forms selected for use. One interesting possibility is that the use of two-handled cups and beakers may come from the Netherlands. In Norfolk, close ties between dissenters and foreign Protestants at home and abroad may have influenced the



11 *Manchester, Platt Hall: Congregational. Two-handled cup, Thomas Maundy, London 1641/42. (On loan to York Cathedral Treasury)*

9 For example Archbishop Parker launched a programme from about 1560 to replace chalices with communion cups of prescribed design.

10 *English Baptist Records*, 2, Church Book: St Andrew's Street Baptist church, Cambridge 1720-1832, pub by the Baptist Historical Society.

11 See Philippa Glanville, *Silver in England*, London 1987, p62. Glanville gives

an example of a two-handled cup used for Anglican communion.

12 The Revd W.J. Pressey, *The Pewter Communion Vessels of Essex Churches*, 1927, p5.

13 See also George Dalgleish, 'Sacramental Silver in the Church of Scotland', *Church Records News and Views*, NADFAS, London 2005, pp9-12.



12 Yarmouth New Meeting:
Congregational.
Beaker, Timothy Skottowe,
Norwich 1637, engraved
1638 and IH/HL. (Sotheby's)



13 Claypath, Durham:
Presbyterian later Congregational.
Communion cups, London
1639/40.

Yarmouth congregation to choose beakers.[fig12] The congregation of the Dutch church in Norwich used Norwich-marked silver beakers from the late sixteenth century as did other foreign religious communities in Norfolk. Bishop John Parkhurst of the Norwich diocese, along with the Bishops of Salisbury and Winchester, gave the congregation at Zurich a set of silver-gilt beakers for communion.¹⁴ At present, there is more evidence for Dutch influence on the use of the beaker in church than the two-handled cup, but documents show that the English Presbyterians at the Octagon chapel in Norwich turned in six silver cups to pay for the four new silver cups purchased in 1785.¹⁵ Although neither description of the silver sets mention handles, is it too fanciful to suppose that the earlier cups for a congregation which dated back to the seventeenth century were two-handled? Was there a Dutch connection? Interestingly, Timothy Schroder has pointed out that the precursor of the college or ox-eye cup, which may be the prototype of the two-handled cup, is derived from late sixteenth-century Netherlandish tin-glazed pots that are often inscribed with the sacred monogram.¹⁶

Of further significance for the Nonconformist preference for two-handled cups is the link between two-handled cups and sociable, corporate drinking. Both the college cups and other designs of two-handled cups were given as gifts to Oxford colleges. London livery companies, the Inns of Court and the nobility used such cups.¹⁷ These two-handled vessels had become ceremonial drinking cups. Passed from one to another around a table they reinforced fellowship and the cohesiveness of the group. This feeling of fellowship and equality within the community would have had a strong resonance with early dissenting groups where equality of membership was an important principle of the organisation.

Eamon Duffy pointed out, at his lecture at the 'Sacred Silver' conference at the V&A in November 2005, that two-handled cups were commonly used in the early Christian church between AD800 and 1200. He attributed their use to the need for sturdy vessels to hold large amounts of wine that could be handed around three times. We have not found any evidence that dissenters were consciously looking back to the early church through the use of two-handled cups, but it is not inconceivable.

It might be thought that fashion did not play a part in the acquisition of Nonconformist plate, but the objects themselves tell a different story. While maintaining the preference for two-handled cups, over nearly 200 years, the surviving pieces change in profile, size and design in line with those available to consumers at the time they were bought.[fig 16] In the mid-seventeenth century two-handled cups were new and fashionable objects in their own right and especially popular after the Restoration when a cup or porringer on a salver, gilt and chased or engraved, was considered a handsome presentation gift.[fig 14] Although usually intended as drinking vessels, by the eighteenth century two-handled cups had evolved into decorative presentation or race prizes and are still used as trophies today. We are not suggesting that Nonconformists actively chose the most fashionable styles available, as clearly they did not want to use or pay for unnecessary decoration, but they did not attempt to remain with an earlier form for its own sake.[fig 15]

Although the two-handled cup appears to be the overwhelming preference of Nonconformist congregations, other types of vessel survive which suggest that it was far from exclusively adopted. The

14 Christopher Hartop (ed), *East Anglian Silver 1550-1750*, Cambridge 2004, p22.

15 *Vestry Book of the Norwich Presbyterian now Unitarian Chapel*, now held in the Norwich Record Office (FC 13/2), 1 Oct 1785.

16 Timothy Schroder, *English Domestic Silver 1500-1900*, The National Trust, 1989, p101 and Hugo Blake, 'Maiolica in the North', *The Archaeology of*

Tin-glazed Earthenware in North-West Europe c.1500-1600, *British Museum Occasional Paper* no122, 1997. Hugo Blake argues that this form of ceramic two-handled cup was a drinking vessel and not put on the altar. It was first imported from Italy but made in Antwerp by the early sixteenth century.

17 Helen Clifford, *A Treasured Inheritance, 600 Years of Oxford College Silver*, Oxford 2004.



14 Ipswich Meeting: English Presbyterian now Unitarian. Four two-handled cups, London 1684–1708. (On loan to Ipswich Museum)

use of silver wine cups, usually found in pairs or sets is widespread, and examples span in date from the seventeenth to the late nineteenth century. Stylistically divergent, geographically distinct and displaying no marked formal preference amongst different denominations, these cups are nevertheless often intimately tied to the histories of individual congregations. George Eyre Evans states that 'the cup without handles seems to have been originally, a secular vessel, but came into sacred use at the time of the withdrawal of the cup from the laity'.¹⁸ While Evans suggests that the cups may have come into religious use when their secular form became unfashionable, in early instances the use of a common secular style, as we have discussed, may have been a deliberate choice in order to disguise the fact that secret services were taking place. One of the most interesting examples of the use of secular-type baluster stem wine cups is the pair used by the Presbyterian congregation at Claypath in Durham, currently displayed in Durham Cathedral.[fig 13] Presbyterian worship in Claypath dates from 1669 when a group of dissenters met secretly in the house of John Heighington, a local shoemaker, and it is thought that meetings continued to be held there until the building of the first chapel in 1750.¹⁹ Not only do the cups predate the establishment of the first meetings of the congregation by almost thirty years but, decorated with a chased stylised leaf pattern, they are unusually ornate for Nonconformist communion cups, which might suggest that they were originally intended for secular use.

Several examples of cups dating from the 1650s and 1660s resemble typical Anglican forms, with bucket-shaped bowls and baluster stems, such as those used by the Unitarian congregation of Old Bent Chapel, Lancashire; the Flavel cup of the Prince's Street Congregational Church, Devonport; James's Presbyterian Meeting, Exeter, or the Independent Meeting, Plymouth. It is likely that these individual cups actually belonged to Anglican ministers who were expelled from the Church of England by the Act of Uniformity in 1662.²⁰ As many Nonconformist congregations favoured pairs or sets of cups, disliking the hierarchical association of single vessels, some congregations, such as James's Meeting in Exeter had their original cup copied years later.²¹ However, the choice of maintaining this old style instead of adopting a new one, may also have been informed by the recognition of the significance of the cup itself in relation to the history of the congregation.

Another pragmatic decision which brought silver into the communities was as part of a refurbishment or building programme. Purchase, gifts and donations often coincided with or commemorated the building of the congregation's meeting-house. For example, the Congregationalists built a meeting-house in Maidenhead in 1784, the same year in which their minister, John Cooke was ordained.²² It is likely that the pewter communion cup was made to



15 Matthew Henry's Chapel, Chester: Presbyterian, later Unitarian. Two-handled cups, left: William Andrews, London 1703/04; right: Thomas Tearle, London, 1723/24. (The Trustees of Matthew Henry's Unitarian Chapel Chester: on loan to the Grosvenor Museum, Chester)



16 Hackney, New Gravel Pit: Unitarian. Two-handled cups and communion plates, Charles Fox II, London 1834/45.

18 Evans, (as note 2), vol 4 p1.

19 *Durham Presbyterian Church Centenary 1872–1972*, Durham 1974, p1.

20 This was certainly the case with the Flavel cup, which belonged to the Revd John Flavel, who had been ejected from the Anglican living of St Clement, Townstalin. He and his followers continued to worship privately until the building of the Independent meeting-house in 1672.

21 The first cup is inscribed 'No. 1 James's Meeting', maker's mark IW, London 1576/77. The second cup, 'No.2 James's Meeting', Isaac Marsh, London 1661/62.

22 Cup engraved on the base 'Meeting-house, Maidenhead, 1784'. Information about the building of the meeting-house and the new minister supplied by the local history library.



17 Maidenhead: Congregational. Communion cup, pewter, engraved 'Meeting house, Maidenhead, 1784'. (Victoria and Albert Museum)



18 Hapton, Norfolk: Early dissent, later Unitarian. Communion cup, maker's mark RH, London 1670/71. (On loan to Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery)



19 Eagle Street, London: Baptist. Communion cup, Thomas Tearle, London 1734/35, engraved with the arms of the Gifford family and given by a deacon, John Payne, in 1734.

celebrate these new beginnings for the community and to equip the meeting-house.[fig 17] Although it does not have a knop in the stem, the general form looks back to earlier Anglican communion cups. Communion plate was sometimes, but not always, seen as necessary to equip the new buildings.

Other unusual cups include a pair of silver cups dated 1670/71 from Hapton in Norwich which resemble beakers on raised feet. Like the Yarmouth beaker (which was made only two years later) they display the strong Dutch influence prevalent in East Anglia.[fig 18] While the form of the Hapton cups is clearly related to the geographic location of the congregation, other unusual forms may perhaps represent the taste of the individual who commissioned or bought them. The passage of the Act of Toleration in 1689, which allowed freedom of worship, may also have prompted the purchase of less secular-looking cups. Examples from Matthew Henry's Chapel, Chester (1725/26) and the great meeting-house, Coventry (1731/32) are plain inverted bell-shaped bowls on wide spreading stems not unlike Anglican communion cups of the period. More extraordinary is the cup from the Eagle Street Baptist Chapel, London (later Kingsgate Chapel) which was part of an original set of twelve identical communion cups and is now the only piece remaining in this country.[fig 19] Its design, a bell-shaped foot separated from the bowl only by a knop, is unique amongst surviving Non-conformist communion plate. Gilt within the bowl, the cup is engraved with the coat of arms of the Gifford family, a member of which, Andrew Gifford was minister of the congregation. It bears the inscription 'The Gift of brother John Payne to the Protestant Dissenting Congregation in Eagle Street - Baptised upon a Personal Profession of Repentance towards God & Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. October ye 4th 1734'. The cups were made in London in 1734/35, suggesting that they were either commissioned or purchased specifically for the purpose by Payne, one of the congregation's six deacons. The chapel owned a number of other communion vessels including a set of pewter, which may have been for everyday use, while the Gifford cups were reserved for special services. The cups bear the maker's mark of Thomas Tearle who, despite 'never aspiring to important pieces, or displaying great originality', is acknowledged by Grimwade as an 'excellent maker of cups, tankards and salvers ... as one would expect from his apprenticeship' (to Gabriel Sleath).²³ The purchase of plain, but skilfully made silverware was common throughout the Nonconformist community



20 Old Meeting, Norwich: Congregational. Set of communion cups, John Wirgman, London 1757/58, engraved 'Gift of Mr B. Balderston... 1757'.

23 Arthur G. Grimwade, *London Goldsmiths 1697-1837*, London 1976, from

the original registers in Goldsmiths' Hall and other sources, p679.

in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Taller cups with longer bowls predominate in the eighteenth century, and though fairly typical of contemporary secular wine cups, such forms were used by Anglicans as well as by Nonconformists. A set of six silver cups, John Wirgman 1757/58, with inverted bell-shaped bowls on tall knopped stems, was given to the Old Meeting, Norwich.[fig 20] Tall wine cup shapes continued to have currency into the mid-nineteenth century and were adopted by mass-market manufacturers such as Elkington and Edward Barnard and produced in electroplated nickel silver. Many congregations found it cheaper and more convenient to order standard electroplated communion vessels from the catalogues of such companies. Although primarily aimed at the Anglican market, there are examples of pairs of cups (usually part of sets that included two cups, a flagon and a communion plate), such as those owned by the Unitarian chapels at Carter Lane, Deal, that are marked with the sacred monogram IHS.[fig 21] The pair of electroplated cups used by the High Road, Lee, Baptist Chapel dated 1855, maintain this basic form but are embellished by neo-gothic tracery around the rim and foot.[fig 22] If at any time the purchase of communion cups had been motivated by the need to distance Nonconformist churches from the established Church of England, then such considerations had obviously been overcome at Carter Lane, Deal and High Road, Lee. In the Victorian period the new fervour in religious life led to the restoration of old, and the building of new, chapels for Nonconformists as well as Anglicans and Roman Catholics. The new equipment ordered by the Nonconformists appears to be almost entirely of standard Anglican design. It was largely plainer than the Established Church silver. Occasionally an historicist design of two-handled cup was ordered for the communion, attempting to recreate early eighteenth-century form and decoration.

We have concentrated on two-handled cups and wine cups in this article as they are the most prevalent forms. The tankards, mugs, flagons and communion dishes [fig 25] used by Nonconformists do not differ greatly in design from domestic examples, although there are some surprising exceptions. The main innovation in communion vessels from the Nonconformist community came in the form of individual cups at the end of the nineteenth century. These cups, made of glass or metal could be passed in trays.[fig 23] The credit for the invention is still open to debate. In England, the main candidate is the Revd John Henry Jowett, a Congregational Minister of Carrs



21 Deal: English Presbyterian, then Unitarian. Cups and communion plate, EPNS, Elkington & Co., circa 1855.



22 High Road, Lee, London: Baptist. Flagon and two cups, EPNS, engraved 'Baptist Church, High road, Lee. 18th Sept.1855'.



23 Old Meeting, Norwich: Congregational. Oak frame and individual glass cups, the frame made locally by Deacon Hare's furniture firm and presented in 1922.



24 *Norwich Octagon: English Presbyterian now Unitarian. Two-handled cup, Benjamin Mountigue?, London 1785/86. (On loan to Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery)*



25 *Warminster: English Presbyterian then Unitarian. Flagon and tankards maker's mark TW, communion plates James Young, all London, 1789/90.*



26 *Stoke Newington Green: Now Unitarian. Two-handled cups, Gabriel Sleath, London, 1733/34. 'The Congregation at Newington Green, 1733'.*

Lane Chapel in Birmingham 1895–1909. His huge congregation (of 1,253 by 1907) as well as public health concerns, may have led to the adoption of individual cups. However, in America contenders such as John G. Thomas, a Congregational minister of Lima, Ohio claimed to have tried the cups in 1893 and the pastor of the Central Presbyterian Church in Rochester was using them in 1894.²⁴ The use of individual cups spread rapidly through almost all the Nonconformist communities making the congregations' silver vessels redundant. Disposable, individual plastic cups are now for sale on the internet.

How was the silver acquired for the congregations? As with Anglican plate, there are a number of routes such as purchase, gift and bequest although it could also be on loan. Quite a few documents record the purchase of silver. The usual procedure was to raise a subscription amongst members or, if the congregation was well endowed, sufficient money could be found from the 'chapel repair fund'. The congregations' own regular contributions or 'ordination money' also bought communion equipment. The most complete account of a purchase can be found in the financial accounts of the Norwich English Presbyterians.[*fig 24*] These give not only the reasons behind the new purchase: that the old silver cups and pewter flagons are 'much worn and unfit for use' but also detail the new choice of four silver-plated flagons and four silver cups, and the subsequent decision to purchase 'only four silver cups gilded within side', with covers to them. These were duly purchased, 'the flagons not being deem'd necessary'. The cups were purchased through Mr Isaac Marsh, who was noted as a cutler in an account of Norwich freemen. The silver cost £39 10s and the six communion plates given in 1713 by the Dutch merchant John Raining were polished for £1 1s. This was paid for by turning in the six silver cups which raised £13 13s and the pewter tankards sold for 10s. A plate case was purchased for £1 1s.²⁵

It might be argued that as many of the items were received as gifts there was a randomness in their acquisition, with no choice exercised. The consistency of the surviving object types and the documentary evidence tell a different story. The earliest attested gifts, based on engraved inscriptions, date from the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. Before the Toleration Act of 1689 it would have been unwise to be so open. The engraving on a two-handled cup in the V&A, made in 1707/08 for the But Lane meeting, records that it was given by E. Swallow to the church in that year. However, an engraved inscription of dedication may bear a date later than that of manufacture. Christopher Stell estimated that 48½ years might on average elapse before the silver was donated so that it had become unfashionable and unwanted.²⁶ It is unlikely that this was the reason or meaning behind the donation. People would have wanted to give objects that had significance for themselves as well as a use for the community. The donations consistently show a preference for the main types of forms such as two-handled cups, wine cups and communion plates.[*fig 26*]

The practice of the loan of silver to Nonconformist communities which then became gifts or bequests to the communities raises the possibility that some of the discrepancy of manufacturing date and engraved inscription may be accounted for in this way. The church book of St Andrew's Street Baptist Church in Cambridge recorded in 1761 that two silver cups were borrowed for use in the commun-

ion service from Mr Ivatt. He died in 1774 leaving a silver cup to the church.²⁷ Ministers could also be responsible for buying silver for communion use which they later gave or bequeathed to their congregations. James Forbes, a leading dissenter, fostered an Independent congregation in Gloucester and organised the building of the meeting-house opened in 1699. He settled four mugs, made in 1702 by London goldsmith John Sutton, on the eight trustees of the meeting-house in 1710 'for sacrament at the Lord's supper'.²⁸[fig 1]

The relationship of the meeting-houses with their silver is complicated by the practice of ministers moving between congregations. If the silver had been bought by the minister then he could take it with him when he moved. Without engraved inscriptions or documentary evidence of when the silver first had a religious use it is hard to know if there was an earlier connection with a Nonconformist community. Prince's Street Church in Devonport owned a cup, dated 1663 with the initials DIF, which had had a long and illustrious association with the Nonconformist community that was still remembered when an account of its history was written in 1886. The cup had been given to the church by the Revd Andrew Kinsman between 1763 and 1793 but it was said to have been the property of Revd John Flavel of Dartmouth and used by him after the Act of Uniformity of 1662 when he left the Anglican Church.²⁹ These examples demonstrate that to assume the silver had had a domestic use before being pressed into service in the church is not always correct.

Another pragmatic decision which brought silver into the communities was as part of a refurbishment or building programme. Purchase, gifts and donations often coincided with or commemorated the building of the congregation's meeting-house.

Is there any pattern to the choice of silversmiths used by Nonconformist communities? A number of names do recur frequently, such as the Bateman family, Richard Green, Richard Gurney and Thomas Cooke, Nathaniel Lock and Humphrey Payne. These silversmiths supplied congregations across the country. Why were these individuals favoured? Did they have a Nonconformist background? Why was London more often chosen for the supply of silver instead of more convenient local silversmiths? To understand fully the mechanisms of the supply of silver more documentary evidence is necessary, but some observations can be made in terms of the

purchase. The deacons of the congregation were often charged with acquiring the silver. It may have been that a local intermediary contacted the London goldsmith, as in the case of Norwich and Mr Isaac Marsh. Some congregations may have gone directly to the maker. One document does give more detail. In 1786, the Leicester Great Meeting requested that two members, Mr Nutt and Mr Goode, raise sufficient money to pay for communion silver.

The sum required for the purpose was supposed would be about twenty five pounds. Mr Hennell exceeded the order.

Robert Hennell's bill for £38 3s included the manufacture and duty on eight two-handled cups, 'best polished', engraving the inscriptions and the case. Mr Nutt paid the bill but had to wait until 1791 before being fully compensated.³⁰

Why choose London? Obviously London offered more choice and competitive prices. In the early days of dissent it offered communities outside the city anonymity. Were the silversmiths chosen most frequently specialists in church plate or the sort of large producers that might be expected to have wide sales or the makers of standard plain shapes that Nonconformists desired? All silversmiths would make church plate and some of the Victorian suppliers were, as might be expected, major manufacturers like Elkington, but significantly a number of the earlier businesses do seem to have made plainer work. Grimwade's assessments confirm this. He describes Humphrey Payne's silver as 'never in any way ambitious ... limited to plain domestic pieces'. Gabriel Sleath made 'standard types of hollow-ware'. The Bateman family had an extensive business supplying thin sheet, standardised silver but significantly they may have had Nonconformist sympathies. Whether this made them more attractive to their clients is another matter. Peter Bateman, son of Hester, left bequests to Nonconformists in Newport Pagnall and the Baptist Academy in Stepney. In 1805 he gave a chandelier to the meeting-house in Newport Pagnall, whose minister's son had married into the Bateman family.³¹ It has proved very difficult to try and determine the religious affiliation of many of the other silversmiths. It may or may not have been a deciding factor for congregations, but for the present that motivation cannot be determined except where the silversmith was a member, as in the case of John Elston, who made a pair of two-handled

24 Charles D. Cashdollar, *A spiritual Home*, Penn. State University, 2000, pp53-55.

25 *Vestry Book of the Norwich Presbyterian now Unitarian Chapel*, now held in the Norfolk Record Office, FC 13/2, 1 Oct 1st 1785 and FC 13/3 March 2nd 1786, Feb 21st, 1787.

26 Christopher Stell, *Nonconformist Communion Plate*, typescript of a lecture read to the Society of Antiquaries, London, 21 February 1974.

27 *English Baptist Records*, 2, Church Book: St Andrew's Street Baptist Church, Cambridge 1720-1832, pub

by the Baptist Historical Society, 4 July 1762; further mention of silver cups lent by Mr Ivatt. 8 Dec 1774: Mr Ivatt bequeaths one silver cup to the meeting.

28 Deed of trust between James Forbes and the Trustees of the Gloucester Independent Meeting, 28

April 1710, Gloucester Records Office. D4270/4/1/5.

29 *Congregational Historical Society*, no3, 1907-08, p153.

30 Account of the purchase of the silver cups of 5 June 1786, with a copy of the bill from Robert Hennell, dated

29 November 1786, and a list of subscribers for the plate, The Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland (n/u/179/128/43).

31 David S. Shure, *Hester Bateman*, London 1959 and Arthur Grimwade (as note 23).