



Royal Silver in National Trust Houses

By James Rothwell



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hen Prince Henry, subsequently Duke of Gloucester, visited Belton House in Lincolnshire in the 1920s he encountered a prodigious display of silver, as described by the wife of the then owner, Maud, Lady Brownlow:

‘A red carpet ... had been put down the steps, and along the Marble Hall as far as the door into the Saloon, and the beautiful Silver Wine Cooler, filled with lovely red Amaryllis, had been placed at the end of it ... The large dining room looked quite magnificent with the whole table decorated with gold plate [silver-gilt], and great bowls and vases of Belton roses ... the little dining room and Red Drawing room had Silver plate, and bowls and vases of sweetpeas ...’¹

The Prince cannot have failed to notice that a sizeable proportion of what was thus laid out before him was bedecked with the royal arms,² and, in the case of the vast silver wine cooler, or cistern, of 1770 by Thomas Heming, (Fig. 1), he would also have seen that the handles are weighty representations of the lion and

¹National Trust (henceforth NT) curatorial files, Hardwick office, Typescript copy of notes corrected by Maud, Lady Brownlow about the visit of HRH Prince Henry, undated (between 1921 and 1927).

²Approaching 300 pieces are noted as bearing the royal arms in R & S Garrard’s *Inventory of Plate. The Rt.Hon. Earl Brownlow. 1890*, NT, Belton House, inv. no. This plate list records both the Belton and Ashridge plate.



Fig. 1 Bottle cistern by Thomas Heming, London, 1770, Silver, width 137 cm. National Trust, Belton House. Photo ©National Trust Images/Roy Fox

unicorn supporters. Although Belton's royal silver was substantially denuded as a result of sales by the 6th Lord Brownlow in 1929 and 1963³ there remains an impressive array which, together with that in other National Trust collections, represents the many ways in which royal plate entered aristocratic ownership.

The great bulk of pieces of silver bearing royal arms were perquisites (from which derives the more commonly used, and colloquial, 'perk'), officially loaned out to those with prominent royal appointments, who thereby represented the monarch, and by custom from the late seventeenth century subsequently discharged to the borrower to become his or her personal property.⁴ Sir John Cust, 3rd Bt (1718-1770), father of the 1st Lord Brownlow, was twice appointed Speaker of the House of Commons and thus received twice the Speaker's perquisite quantity of plate, 8,000 ounces in total. This included the Heming cistern which remains at Belton, having fortuitously failed to sell in 1963, together with a dozen of the 78 plates (George Methuen, 1754), six of 24 soup plates (Thomas Heming, 1761), three of 28 oval and six of 18 round dishes (various makers and dates), four of eight sauce boats with stands and ladels (Heming, 1761) and a set of three vases for sugar, pepper and mustard (possibly John Romer, c. 1770).⁵

Another Speaker associated with a National Trust house, Arthur Onslow (1691-1768) of the Clandon Park family, was also appointed multiple times, and as was the case with Cust, he received a total of 8,000 ounces for his first two terms, in 1728 and 1735.⁶ He was thus awash with practical plate, predominantly for dining, and when he was appointed a third time in 1748 he was granted, according to the Jewel Office warrant book, 124 ounces of gold 'in lieu of the usual Quantity of Four Thousand ounces of White Plate allowed former Speakers, to be made after such fashion as he shall direct'.⁷ The gold was worth about £680 and we are fortunate to know exactly how Onslow disposed of it thanks to the commission being given to George Wickes, whose ledgers survive. Onslow directed that 92 oz 16½ dwt be used to make a gold cup and cover, described as 'curiously wrought' in the Jewel Office delivery book,⁸ whilst the remainder funded 'the expense of Fashion & Gilding of the model [i.e. a copy] of the above [gold] cup made in silver'.⁹ That gave a pair of covered cups for display on the sideboard though sadly it does not appear that either they or anything from the earlier perquisite grants survive, perhaps being victims of the 3rd Earl of Onslow's extensive dispersals following his inheritance in 1827.¹⁰ The large, surviving Paul Storr service, of which only a pair of sauce tureens remains

³*Fine Old English Silver of the 17th and 18th Centuries, the property of the Rt. Hon. Lord Brownlow*, Christie's, London, 13th March 1929 and *Magnificent English Royal Plate, the property of the Right Honourable the Lord Brownlow*, Christie's, London, 29th May 1963.

⁴For a thorough discussion of perquisite plate see James Rothwell, *Silver for Entertaining: The Ickworth Collection*, 2017, pp. 34-6. The gradations were as follows: colonial governors received 180 oz of white chapel plate, ambassadorial secretaries 300 oz, the Lord Chamberlain, Lord steward, the Treasurer and the Comptroller of the Household plus the Master of the Horse, Groom of the Stole, and Secretaries of State received 1000 oz white, the Speaker 4000 oz white and ambassadors 5893 oz white and 1066 oz gilt.

⁵NT, Belton House, *An account of Sr Brownlows [Cust's] Plate taken on the 11th of July 1772*. As was often the case there are disparities between the items marked therein as bearing the royal arms and the official lists of what was distributed by the Jewel Office (UK National Archives (henceforth NA), LC 9/45, Jewel Office Delivery Book 1732-93, ff. 181 and 257). See Rothwell 2017, op. cit., pp. 35 and 159 for an explanation.

⁶NA LC 9/44, Jewel Office Delivery Book 1698-1732, f. 300 and LC 9/45, Jewel Office Delivery Book 1732-93, f. 21.

⁷NA, LC 5/110 Jewel Office Warrant Book 1732-62, f. 217.

⁸NA, LC 9/45, Jewel Office Delivery Book 1732-93, f. 40

⁹National Art Library, V & A, Garrard Ledgers, VAM 1, George Wickes ledger

¹⁰Sophie Chessum and Christopher Rowell, *Clandon Park*, 2014, pp. 75-6. The future 1st Earl of Onslow received an additional 1000 oz of perquisite plate upon being appointed Comptroller of the King's Household in 1778 but none of that is known to survive either. For the latter grant see NA, LC 9/45, Jewel Office Delivery Book 1732-93, f. 290



Fig. 2 Three oval dishes by Thomas Heming, London, 1761. Silver, width 38.7 cm. Lord Egremont, Petworth House. Photo © Lord Egremont/Christie's

in the Clandon collection, must have been commissioned by Thomas Cranley Onslow (1778-1861), who married in 1812, the year of manufacture.¹¹

Arthur Onslow's son and heir, George, 4th Baron and subsequently 1st Earl of Onslow (1731-1814), had a perquisite grant of 1000 ounces of white (un-gilded) plate in 1778 on being appointed Comptroller of the King's Household¹² and although that, like the Speaker's silver, may well have been melted down in the early nineteenth century, another of the posts for which 1000 ounces was the requisite weight, Secretary of State, is represented still amongst the silver at Petworth House which was put on display to the public for the first time this year. Charles Wyndham, 2nd Earl of Egremont (1710-63) succeeded William Pitt the Elder as Secretary of State for the Southern Department in October, 1761 and the associated grant was dominated by oval (Fig. 2) and circular dishes with accompanying covers.¹³ Many of these still exist in the present Lord Egremont's collection including twelve of the eighteen dish covers. The Earl's appointment as Secretary of State was hot on the heels of being named 'one of His Majesty's Ambassadors Extraordinary and Plenipotentiaries to the Congress to be held at the Imperial City of Augsbourg' in May, 1761. This projected peace negotiation to end what is now known as the Seven Years War did not, in fact, come to pass but Lord Egremont still kept the silver together with another ambassadorial perquisite, a pair of portraits of George III and Queen Charlotte by Allan Ramsay. This tranche of plate, amounting to the prescribed 5893 oz white and

¹¹He was the younger brother of the 3rd Earl and father of the 4th Earl. The service has the Onslow arms but without a coronet so cannot relate to the 1st, 2nd or 3rd Earls of Onslow. A bread basket and dinner and soup plates were sold at Christie's, New York, 21 May 2013, lots 126, 128 and 129.

¹²NA, LC 9/45, Jewel Office Delivery Book 1732-93, f. 290.

¹³*Ibid*, f. 181.



Fig. 3

Fig. 3 Four triangular dishes by Aymé Videau, London, 1760. Silver, width 24.8 cm. Lord Egremont, Petworth House. Photo © Lord Egremont/Christie's



Fig. 4

Fig. 4 Detail of the royal arms on one of the triangular dishes by Aymé Videau, London, 1760. Lord Egremont, Petworth House. Photo © Lord Egremont/Christie's



Fig. 5 Casters by Pierre Gillois, London, 1760. Silver, height 20.3 cm and 17.1 cm. Lord Egremont, Petworth House. Photo © Lord Egremont/Christie's



Fig.6 One of a set of twelve candelabra by Simon Le Sage and James Peltro, London, 1758. Silver, height 57.8 cm. National Trust, Ickworth. Photo © National Trust Images/Robert Thrift

1066 oz gilt (ambassadors received the greatest of all allowances), included no less than 47 gadrooned dishes of oval, triangular and cushion shapes (Figs. 3-4), six dozen plates, a surtout, eight candlesticks for the table, two sets of casters (Fig. 5), four ice pails and eight tureens with accompanying Onslow pattern ladles. Apart from the surtout, candlesticks and ice pails most of the objects, primarily by Thomas Heming, are still represented at Petworth.

Ambassadorial plate can also be found at Ickworth in Suffolk, where it is in profusion and includes perhaps the most magnificent and extensive set of London-made Rococo candelabra (Fig. 6) ever commissioned, at Knole in Kent and at Mount Stewart in Northern Ireland.¹⁴ These collections relate, respectively, to the embassies of the 2nd Earl of Bristol at Madrid from 1758-62, the 1st Lord (subsequently Earl) Whitworth at Paris from 1802-3 and the 1st Lord Stewart (subsequently 3rd Marquess of Londonderry) at Vienna from 1814-23. Another, late collection of perquisite plate is to be found at Attingham Park in Shropshire, much of it by Paul Storr and dating from 1810-14. It was granted to the Hon. William Noel-Hill (1773-1842), subsequently 3rd Lord Berwick, during his term at the Court of the Kingdom of Sardinia from 1807 to 1824. He never attained the outright rank of ambassador, however, and in normal circumstances an envoy was not entitled to perquisite plate so he must have been, like William Eden in Paris in 1786, 'Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary ... with the Appointment of Ambassador', meaning he gained the rewards of an ambassadorial position without the title.¹⁵ Such an appointment seems mostly to have been associated with peace treaties and other negotiations and may well, in Noel-Hill's case, have been prompted by the anticipated defeat of Napoleon. It is fitting that what is the latest surviving example of ambassadorial plate,¹⁶ granted in 1813 and presumably delivered the following year, should be largely intact. There is a full complement of table silver with

¹⁴For an account of the Ickworth plate see Rothwell 2017, op. cit. and for Mount Stewart see James Rothwell, 'Silver at Mount Stewart: Dazzling across Europe', *National Trust Historic Houses & Collections Annual 2017*, pp. 40-45. At Knole there are four ice pails of 1776 by Aaron Lestourgeon which bear the royal arms as borne after 1801 and these pieces are thus likely to have been part of Whitworth's ambassadorial plate. Much more associated with his embassy, and that of the 3rd Duke of Dorset to Paris from 1784-9 was sold at Christie's, London, 20 May 1987. Perhaps because of the rush to get over to Paris following the Peace of Amiens, Whitworth seems to have marked up much of the Knole plate with the King's arms to serve as ambassadorial plate.

¹⁵For Eden's appointment and grant of perquisite plate in 1786 see NA, LC 9/45, Jewel Office Delivery Book 1732-93, f. 326.

¹⁶The practice was stopped in 1822. See John Cornforth, 'In the Taste of an Ambassador', *Country Life*, 4 March 2004, p. 86.

plates, dishes, tureens, salts, sauce boats and cutlery plus silver-gilt pieces for dessert and for the service of tea. Most magnificent of all in this sumptuous array is a silver-gilt candelabra centrepiece of 1814 by Paul Storr (Fig. 7) with superbly sculpted figures of the Three Graces supporting a basket for fruit.

In addition to perquisites, the other key way in which silver bearing the monarch's arms entered aristocratic collections was through the king or queen acting as Godparent and, as was the custom, giving a gift of silver-gilt. This was graded according to rank with a non-noble father qualifying for up to 100 oz, a baron 110 oz, a viscount 120 oz, an earl or son of a duke if not a courtesy marquess 130 oz, a marquess 160 oz and a duke 200 oz.¹⁷ Numerous families associated with National Trust houses were recipients of royal Christening plate, more than thirty instances being recorded in the Jewel Office delivery books covering the years 1698 to 1793. Surprisingly, however, very few of the items received were preserved. Some were taken as more practical, domestic plate rather than the cup and cover or ewer and basin officially proffered, as was the case with the 1st Lord Hervey (subsequently Earl of Bristol) in 1708. Queen Anne stood as Godmother to his daughter Ann (1707-81) and the Jewel Office recorded that Pierre Platel received 'two large gilt Salvers' on his behalf. Hervey's accounts, however, reveal that he paid Platel £63 10s 'more than ye office allowed' to receive instead a 'silver frame & ye 5 covers to it'.¹⁸ Others were probably cashed in immediately, or subsequently melted to acquire more fashionable items, and the only clearly identifiable example surviving and on public view in a National Trust house is the gilt cup and cover of 1764 by



Fig. 7 Candelabra centrepiece by Paul Storr, London, 1814. Silver-gilt, height 52 cm. National Trust, Attingham Park. Photo © National Trust Images/ Claire Reeves

¹⁷Rothwell 2017 op. cit., p. 15, note 92.

¹⁸Rothwell 2017, op. cit., p. 12.



Fig. 8



Fig. 9

Fig. 8 Hon. William Frederick Wyndham's royal Christening cup and cover by Thomas Heming, London, 1764. Silver-gilt, height 33.6 cm. Lord Egremont, Petworth House, Photo © Lord Egremont/Christie's

Fig. 9 The 7th Earl of Jersey's royal Christening cup and cover by Robert Garrard, London, 1844. Silver-gilt, height 10 cm. National Trust, Osterley Park. Photo © National Trust Images/Christopher Warleigh-Lack.

Thomas Heming (Fig. 8) at Petworth, in the collection of Lord Egremont. This piece, which is after a design by William Kent, was issued in 1765 to the widowed Countess of Egremont on behalf of her last child by the 2nd Earl, the Hon. William Frederick Wyndham (1763-1828).¹⁹

Until it was sold in 1987 there was at Knole a large oval silver-gilt tray with basket-weave sides marked for John Pritts or Joseph Preedy, 1803. It is engraved with both the royal and Sackville arms and inscribed 'Given by his most Excellent MAJESTY GEORGE the third, to his Godson, George John Frederick Sackville, [4th] Duke of Dorset. Born Novr. 15 1793'.²⁰ As it weighs just over 200 ounces this could have been a belated Christening present, or alternatively have been given on the Duke's tenth birthday. Other royal Christening gifts, such as those by a queen consort or by a monarch themselves after the demise of perquisite plate, do not appear in the Jewel Office records but are known through family tradition or an inscription on the piece. Adelbert Brownlow-Cust, subsequently 3rd Earl Brownlow, and Lady Adelaide Chetwynd-Talbot were both born in 1844 and both were Godchildren of Queen Adelaide who is said to have given them identical ewers and basins by Richard Sawyer of Dublin, 1829 and 1830, these coming together at Belton, where they still are, when the couple married in 1868. Just a year after Queen Adelaide's double gifts, her niece Queen Victoria stood sponsor to the Hon. Victor Villiers, subsequently 7th Earl of Jersey, and the elaborate Renaissance inspired cup and cover in silver-gilt marked by Robert Garrard for 1844 (Fig. 9) bears the inscription 'To the Hon.ble Victor Albert George Villiers from his Godmother Victoria R. May 17th 1845'. The cup remains at the Jersey

¹⁹NA, LC 9/45 Jewel Office Delivery Book 1732-93, f. f.221 2 August 1765, 'Delivered to the Lady Egremont as a Present from His Majesty at the Christening of her Child, One gilt Cup and Cover and Dish wt. 130 [oz] 5 [dwt] [signed for by] 'Bernard Brooshoofe For Her Ladyship'. The dish specified in the grant is not known to survive. Earlier royal Christening gifts often included a salver with a cup and cover.

²⁰Christie's, London, 20 May 1987, lot 138.



Fig. 10

Fig. 10 *The Prince's Cup* by James Young, London, 1785. Silver-gilt, height 33 cm. National Trust, Uppark.

Photo © National Trust Images/Andrew Fetherston

family seat on the western edge of London, Osterley Park.

Another type of royal gift, the race cup, was required to be competed for. There had been a long tradition of monarchs sponsoring race prizes and the Jewel Office is recorded as issuing a whole series of gold cups to be run for at Newmarket and Yorkshire meetings during the reign of Queen Anne.²¹ None of these is within a National Trust house but there is a fine later example at Uppark in the form of the *Prince's Cup* of 1785 by James Young (Fig. 10). This neo-classical trophy is topped with Prince of Wales feathers issuing out of a crown and has oval plaques depicting Bacchus and Neptune. It was provided by the Prince for one of the races held over three days on West Harting Down, part of Sir Harry Fetherstonhaugh, 2nd Bt's Sussex estate. Sir Harry competed for it and won on his own horse, *Epaminondas*, against the Prince of Wales's *Nottingham*, ridden by his proverbially foul-mouthed jockey, Sir John Lade.²²

In all the instances thus far considered silver with a royal provenance was acquired without payment having to be made, apart from token fees in the case of perquisite plate. There is, though, a considerable tranche in addition which was, in one form or another, purchased. The earliest example is the great silver bottle cistern of 1695 attributed to Benjamin Bathurst (Fig. 11) at Osterley Park.²³ This bears the arms of Queen Anne and must have formed part of a perquisite grant though the recipient is yet to be identified. It was probably sent in to Child's Bank to be exchanged and was recognised to be serviceable and showy by Robert Child of Osterley whose arms impaling those of his wife Sarah Jodrell, whom he married in 1763, it bears in addition to those of the Queen. In 1772 Agneta Yorke noted that the cistern, described by her as 'Massy & large', was under Robert Adam's Carved and gilt mahogany sideboard in the Eating

²¹NA, LC 9/44, Jewel Office Delivery Book 1698-1732, ff. 22, 104 and 159.

²²Christopher Rowell, *Uppark*, 2014, p. 53 and Margaret Mead-Fetherstonhaugh and Oliver Warner, *Uppark and its People*, 1964, pp. 55-8.

²³Timothy Schroder, 'Silver at Osterley', *Apollo*, June 1995, pp. 23-6.



Fig. 11 Bottle cistern attributed to Benjamin Bathurst, London, 1695. Silver, width 101.5 cm, National Park, Osterley Park. Photo © National Trust Images/Christopher Warleigh-Lack.



Fig. 12 A pair of sconces bearing the monogram of William III and Queen Mary, circa 1690. Silver-gilt, height 40 cm. National Trust, Belton House. Photo © National Trust Images/Angelo Hornak.

Room where it was forming part of the permanent display.²⁴

Most purchases of plate with a royal provenance are, however, from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when the antique value and distinguished provenance of former royal pieces was the epitome for collectors. This was prompted by the sending in of much late Stuart plate by the Lord Chamberlain's department in 1808 to Rundell, Bridge and Rundell who, instead of melting, made a profit by passing it on to various wealthy connoisseurs. One such was John Cust, 2nd Baron and 1st Earl Brownlow (1779-1853) who amassed eleven William III sconces (Fig. 12)²⁵ and a pair of Charles II andirons, all royal in origin. The andirons and four sconces were sold in 1963²⁶ but the remainder of

²⁴Eileen Harris, *Ostlerley Park*, 1994, p. 52.

²⁵A twelfth sconce is a copy of 1829 by Robert Garrard to make up a set.

²⁶Christie's, London, 29 May 1963, lots 18 and 23.

the sconces are still at Belton where they were intended to be hung in various of the rooms including the Saloon and the Chapel.

Other royal plate was released in the nineteenth century through posthumous sales, notably those of Queen Charlotte, the Duke of York and the Duke of Sussex, who each had a significant personal collection. An inkstand by Paul de Lamerie of 1726 bearing Queen Charlotte's cypher and crown was at Belton until 1963 and a pair of silver-gilt covered ewers of 1713 by Simon Pantin from the Duke of York's collection had been sold previously, in the sale of 1929.²⁷ Also deriving from the Duke of York is a silver-gilt fox's mask stirrup cup at Petworth, given as a wedding present to the 2nd Lord Leconfield in 1867 and still retaining its leather case. The Duke of Sussex's sale, over four days in June 1843, released some 40,000 ounces of plate to an eager market and one small purchase, of the Duke's personal wine-glass rinser in silver-gilt, by Wrangham and Moulson, 1837,²⁸ is now at Mount Stewart in Northern Ireland together with a copy of 1843 made by Garrards for the initial purchaser, the 1st Duke of Cleveland. The pair were, according to an inscription on the base, 'given by Sir Philip Sassoon Bart MP to the [7th] Marquess & Marchioness of Londonderry' in 1924 as a silver wedding present.

A more prestigious piece from the Sussex sale, the Christian van Vianen cup bearing London hallmarks for 1640,²⁹ is now at Waddesdon Manor together with the portrait of a boy holding it which was painted by Bartholomeus van der Helst in Amsterdam in 1657 (Fig. 13).³⁰ In 2002 a Rothschild family trust also acquired some 120 pieces from George III's Hanover dinner service which was commissioned in the 1770s from the Parisian, Robert-Joseph Auguste, and subsequently extended by Hanoverian court



Fig. 13 Cup by Christian van Vianen, London, 1640. Silver-gilt (gilding later), height 15.5 cm, Waddesdon, The Rothschild Foundation, on loan since 2005 (acc.no.39.1997) National Trust, Waddesdon Manor,

Photo © National Trust Images/Mike Fear

²⁷Ibid, lot 6 and Christie's, London, lot 56.

²⁸Christie's, London, 27 June 1843 (fourth day of the sale), lots 533-5.

²⁹Waddesdon, on loan from The Rothschild Collection (Rothschild Family Trust). Accession number 39.1997.

³⁰Waddesdon, on loan from the Rothschild Foundation. Accession number 12.2005.



Fig. 14 Chandelier (one of a pair) to the design of William Kent, by Balthasar Friederich Behrens, Hanover, 1736-7. Silver, height 118.1 cm. National Trust, Anglesey Abbey. Photo © National Trust Images/ Andreas von Einsiedel.

goldsmiths.³¹ Excluding perquisite plate this probably makes the Waddesdon assemblage of royal silver the largest of any in a National Trust house though it is rivalled in significance by the mid-twentieth century collection of the 1st Lord Fairhaven at Anglesey Abbey in Cambridgeshire. He had a particular enthusiasm for royal provenance and the house contains many exceptionally fine pieces. From the Stuart period there is a pair of enormous altar candlesticks by William Denny and John Bache of 1697, bearing William III's coat of arms and monogram. The Hanoverians are best represented, however, with a soup tureen of 1803 by Daniel Pontifex engraved with Queen Charlotte's monogram and pieces also from three of her sons: Ernest, Duke of Cumberland (subsequently King of Hanover), George IV and, once again, the Duke of Sussex, as well as from her granddaughter, Queen Victoria. From the Sussex collection there is a copy of a virtuoso Rococo basin by William Pitts, 1809, the back engraved with the initials of all the children of George III, and Fairhaven also acquired the Duke's exquisitely fitted out dressing case, the silver by William Frisbee, 1800. Trumping all of this, however, and probably the most important royal silver in the whole of the National Trust is the pair of silver chandeliers which hang in the library (Fig. 14). These, which are masterpieces of silver-smithing, are from a set of five made for George II to the designs of William Kent by Balthasar Friedrich Behrens for the Herrenhausen palace at Hanover. They are topped by royal crowns held aloft by putti with the prancing white horses of the House of Hanover beneath.³²

³¹Waddesdon, on loan from the Rothschild Foundation. Accession number 8.2003.1-82.

³²Oliver Garnett, *Anglesey Abbey*, p. 20.

Royal silver has played a prominent role in the collections of families associated with National Trust houses since the late seventeenth century and though there were many losses during the last hundred years there have also been substantial gains, extending well into the present age. More will doubtless follow, perhaps retrieving some of what has previously been alienated but as it is the Trust's overall holdings must represent the largest collection of silver bearing British royal arms in the world. With the Royal Collection and decorative arts museums in Britain, the United States and Commonwealth countries, this great resource enables the study of silver in the royal context as well as in that of the houses where it now resides.

James Rothwell has worked for the National Trust since 1995 and is the organisation's adviser on silver. He has published numerous articles on the subject, and , in addition to *Silver for Entertaining, The Ickworth Collection* (2017), he is the co-author of *Country House Silver from Dunham Massey* (2006). In collaboration with the Goldsmiths' Company, he has overseen a ground-breaking series of exhibitions of works by contemporary silversmiths in National Trust houses. Currently he serves as chairman of the (English) Silver Society.