

Case 10 (2012-13): A Queen Anne silver-gilt toilet service – The Norfolk toilet service

Expert adviser's statement

Reviewing Committee Secretary's note: Please note that any illustrations referred to have not been reproduced on the Arts Council England Website

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Brief Description of items

A 34-piece silver-gilt toilet service, London, with the maker's mark of Benjamin Pyne 1708 (figure 1)

2. Context

Benjamin Pyne, whose maker's mark is punched on thirty-three of the pieces in this toilet service (see example in figure 2a), worked in London from 1667 to 1727; Joseph Bird, who supplied the snuffers, also worked in London from 1697 to 1735.

This toilet service is the largest complete surviving London-made set and in outstanding condition. Most of the pieces are engraved with the contemporary coat of arms of Thomas Howard, 8th Duke of Norfolk and the engraving survives in pristine condition.

Provenance: Thomas and Maria Howard, 8th Duke and Duchess of Norfolk by descent; Rundell, Bridge and Rundell; The Earls of Lonsdale; Christie's 20 February 1947 (lot 163); Al-Tajir;

Bibliography: Michael Clayton, The Collector's Dictionary of the Silver and Gold of Great Britain and North America, 1985, p.432, pl.71; J.B.Hawkins, The Al-Tajir Collection of Silver and Gold, London, 1983, vol.I, pp.21-23.

Exhibited: The Glory of the Goldsmith: Magnificent Gold and Silver from the Al-Tajir Collection, Christie's, London, 1989, no.53, pp.78-79.

3. Waverley criteria

- The Shireburn toilet service meets the second and third Waverley Criteria
- It is believed to be the largest silver-gilt toilet service ever made in London and is in outstanding condition. It was commissioned as a 'Double Set of Gilt Dressing Plate' (figure 9). Supplied by a leading native goldsmith it provides important evidence for the quality of design and execution produced by the workshop of a London goldsmith working in the plain English style in competition with the leading

Huguenot immigrant goldsmiths who specialized in making such services (figure 2a).

- Its history of use and ownership is exceptionally well documented. Its original commission by the Shireburn family of Stonyhurst, on the Lancashire/Yorkshire borders, and subsequent ownership in the 19th century by the Cumbrian-based Lonsdale family, make this toilet service of particular importance to the history of patronage and collecting in the North West of England.

DETAILED CASE

1. Detailed description of item(s) if more than in Executive summary, and any comments.

A thirty-four piece silver-gilt toilet service supplied by Benjamin Pyne, goldsmith of London, in 1708, to Sir Nicholas Shireburn for his daughter and heiress Mary Shireburn, on her marriage to Thomas Howard, 8th Duke of Norfolk, engraved with the contemporary coat of arms and/or crest of the Dukes of Norfolk and the later cipher of the Earls of Lonsdale (figure 1) The toilet service consists of the following items (the descriptions quote the 1755 listing in the archives at Arundel Castle):-

- 'Two large Comb boxes' 10 in. (25.5 cm.) long
- 'One Square box with a Pin Cushion on the Top' 7 ½ "(19 cm. long) (figure 3a)
- 'Two round Powder Boxes' 5 in. (12.7 cm.) diameter
- 'Two round Patch boxes' 3 ½ in. (9 cm.) diameter
- 'Two Ovall Porringers with Covers' 6 ½ in. (16.5 cm. long, figure 4b)
- 'Two little Cupps with Covers and Salvers' the cups and covers 4 in. (10 cm.) high; the salvers 4 ¾ in. (12 cm) diameter (figure 3a)
- 'Two Pomatum Potts' 3 ½ in. (9 cm.) high (figure 5)
- 'A pair of large Candlesticks' 7 in. (18 cm.) high
- 'A pair of Hand Candlesticks'
- 'A Bason and Ewer' 9 ½ in. (24 cm.) high, the basin 9 in. (22.8 cm.) diameter (figure 3b)
- 'One Looking Glass with a Plate frame' 31 in. (78.5 cm.) high
- 'A pair of snuffers with Snuffpan and extinguisher' (the pair of snuffers marked by Joseph Bird, London; there are two separate extinguishers)
- 'Two Glass Bottles with Muzells and bottoms of Plate' (figure 3a)
- 'Two Ovall Brushes' (figure 6)
- 'Two Comb Brushes'
- 'A Bell'
- 'A Plummet' (figure 4a)

The significance of the item

This is both the most complete and the largest surviving London-made toilet service from the period 1660-1770 (see Appendix 1). It is the only such surviving service to be equipped with a pair of hand candlesticks as well as table candlesticks, reflecting the importance of this special commission for a

double set of dressing plate. Evidence preserved in the archives of the Dukes' of Norfolk provides an explanation for the purpose of each item in the set. The prominent engraving of the coat of arms of Thomas Howard, 8th Duke of Norfolk demonstrates that this toilet service was intended to enhance the status of the new Duchess through her morning levée, a ceremony which is so little understood today and yet was captured for posterity in Hogarth's painting and subsequent prints of *The Countess's Levée* in *Marriage à la Mode*, 1743. The set was intended for use in this ceremony in the setting of the Duchess's State bed-chamber and dressing room at their principal country home at Worksop Manor, Nottinghamshire and would have travelled for use in the morning levée at their other London and country homes, Norfolk House in St James's Square and Arundel Castle, West Sussex.

The toilet service was later acquired by the Royal Goldsmiths, Rundell Bridge and Rundell and by them boxed for re-sale to William Lowther, 1st Earl of Lonsdale. Each of the thirty four pieces were then discreetly engraved with Lord Lonsdale's cypher. This, and the surviving case supplied by Rundells, adds another historical layer to the importance of this toilet service without obscuring the earlier provenance.

The maker

Benjamin Pyne was apprenticed to George Bowers in 1667 for eight years. His first recorded maker's mark – unusually featuring the single letter 'P' was registered at Goldsmiths' Hall in 1697, in which year he registered his second Britannia mark in evidence on thirty-three pieces in this toilet service (figure 2b). Pyne supplied Nicholas Shirburn with silver and mourning rings between 1700 and 1710 when he was described as 'Silver Smith in St. Martin's Le Grand'. Pyne was elected to the Court of the Goldsmiths' Company in 1703. He was appointed Subordinate Goldsmith to King George I on the occasion of that king's coronation in 1714. Benjamin Pyne had supplied ambassadorial plate through the Jewel House for the Duke of Argyll's posting to Madrid in 1711. Pyne also supplied in 1717 a set of silver for the use of George Prince of Wales (later George II) exported for use in Hanover. Pyne became Warden of the Goldsmiths' Company in 1715 and served as Prime Warden in 1725. In 1728 he was elected Beadle but surprisingly died in debt in 1732.

There is no comparable complete toilet service bearing the mark of Benjamin Pyne in the UK, although the pair of glass bottles with silver covers in the Earl of Oxford's toilet service are marked by him (Appendix 1701-14). Pyne worked for several other Recusant families providing both secular and sacred silver; the 1704 chalice, made for the Weld family, is still preserved in their Catholic family chapel at Lulworth Castle, Dorset. Sir Nicholas Shireburn's accounts indicate that in addition to dressing plate for his nephew in 1700, a trimming bason and washball box in 1703, a cruet stand and 'Great Mashine' (table centrepiece) in 1706, Benjamin Pyne also supplied a ciborium and salver in 1704 for use in the family chapel at Stonyhurst where the ciborium remains. Although the toilet service was commissioned and supplied in 1708/9, Sir Nicholas paid Pyne the total cost, £668 19s 10d, over two years. The first payment was made on 18th June 1709 (figure 9); the final payment was made on 6 March 1710/11 (figure 10).

2. Detailed explanation of the outstanding significance of the item(s).

Significance of historical figures associated with the item(s): maker/client/owners?

The toilet service was commissioned in 1708 for Mary Shireburn (figure 7b), by her father Sir Nicholas Shireburn (1658-1717) of Stonyhurst, a prominent member of the Catholic gentry in Lancashire, to celebrate his daughter's marriage in 1709 aged 16 as his heiress to Thomas Howard, 8th Duke of Norfolk (1683-1732) head of the leading Catholic Howard family, and Hereditary Earl Marshal of England. This commission is documented in detail in an indenture dated 1729 and referred to in a further document dated 1755 and signed by Edward Howard, 9th Duke of Norfolk which is preserved in the archives at Arundel Castle. This accurately describes the 8th Duchess's jewels and plate and lists in full the original purpose of each item in the toilet service.

'A Toilett of Gilt Plate Consisting of Two large Comb boxes One Looking Glass with a Plate frame One Square box with a Pin Cushion on the Top Two Glass Bottles with Muzells and bottoms of Plate Two Ovall Porringers with Covers Two round Powder Boxes Two round Patch boxes Two Ovall Brushes Two Comb Brushes Two Pomatum Potts Two little Cupps with Covers and Salvers A pair of large Candlesticks A pair of Hand Candlesticks A pair of snuffers with Snuffpan and Extinguisher A Bason and Ewer A Plummet A Bell'

The 8th Duke of Norfolk was painted by the Catholic artist R. Van Bleek (figure 7a) in fashionable dress with a little gold crucifix on his watch chain. On his return from the Grand Tour which included the requisite visit to Papal Rome, his marriage to a Catholic heiress reinforced his position as head of the Catholic faction in England. Between 1700 and 1704 he remodelled his father's house at Worksop, adding a formal *cour d'honneur* in the baroque style with a grand staircase, decorative murals and a state apartment. John Martin Robinson repeats the rumour that the 8th Duke melted down the old family plate to support the Old Pretender. The 8th Duke and Duchess lived at Worksop from 1710 to 1715. After 1715, when the 8th Duchess objected to the Duke's reaction to the demand for support for the Jacobite cause, she refused to live with him, and these 'unhappy Differences and Disputes' led to 'mutual Separation(sic) from Bed and Board'. Thomas was the last Duke of Norfolk to be imprisoned in the Tower of London (for six months during 1722-23) for his alleged involvement in a Jacobite plot.

The Duchess led her own extravagant life style in London with a house in Arlington Street and a villa in Chiswick. After they separated, Duchess Maria was entitled to the use of the Norfolk jewels and plate for the rest of her lifetime (she died in 1754) when they ceded to her brother-in-law Edward Howard, 9th Duke of Norfolk. After the 8th Duke's death in 1732, she lived with Peregrine Widdrington, another Jacobite Catholic, at Stonyhurst.

Local, regional and national importance

The Dukes of Norfolk still maintain their national status as the premier Catholic noble family with family collections and archives centred at Arundel Castle. The Shireburns of Stonyhurst were a leading Catholic family with property in Lancashire and Yorkshire. Stonyhurst still retains outstanding Catholic collections of international importance. The executors of the 8th Duchess of Norfolk's will indicate the closely interlinked network of local and national Catholic families in the first half of the 18th century. Her executors include Sir Edward Gascoigne of Partington, Yorkshire; Stephen Tempest of Broughton; Edward Weld of Lulworth Castle, Dorset, James Shuttleworth of Lutterworth, Leicestershire and William Sheldon of Weston, Warwickshire; of these the Tempest and Weld family collections are still intact. Sir Nicholas Shireburn was also a considerable patron and collector. On his return from the Grand Tour he refurbished the Elizabethan family seat at Stonyhurst, developed a sophisticated landscape garden and built up an important collection of paintings, and furniture and a considerable library which included the Luttrell Psalter and the Bedford Horae now both in the British Library. On the death of his only son aged 8 in 1702, Sir Nicholas concentrated on planning a dynastic marriage for his only surviving child, his daughter Mary. The wedding of Mary Shireburn and Thomas, 8th Duke of Norfolk took place in London in May 1709 and Sir Nicholas spent nearly seven hundred pounds on an exceptional double set of silver-gilt dressing plate for which Benjamin Pyne was paid by instalments between January 1709 and March 1711 (figures 9-10).

Following French practice, toilet services became fashionable wedding presents indicative of noble and wealthy status on the Restoration of the British monarchy in 1660 but the earliest London-made examples are in white silver. A new wave of confidence following the accession of William and Mary in 1689 encouraged noble patrons to emulate royal practice and a series of silver-gilt toilet services were assembled. That at least nineteen London-made toilet services survive (most of them fragmented) in public and private collections in the UK demonstrates the prestige with which they were regarded. Toilet services continued to be acquired second hand. Rundell Bridge and Rundell acquired the Norfolk toilet service in May 1818 in part payment for the new dinner service by Paul Storr which they supplied for Bernard Howard, 12th Duke of Norfolk. Rundell, Bridge and Rundell sold the Norfolk toilet service to William Lowther, 1st Earl of Lonsdale (1757-1844, figure 11), an enlightened patron of the arts and poetry of whom the diarist Joseph Farington noted 'He has four establishments, one at Lowther, also at Whitehaven, Cottesmere in Rutlandshire and in London; and in each House a complete service of plate'. The Norfolk toilet service was subsequently displayed in the State Bedroom at Lowther Castle. Lord Lonsdale was a steady purchaser of silver between 1802 and 1818.

Summary

Waverley 2

The Norfolk toilet service demonstrates that the plain English style can be as rich and aesthetically satisfying and requires as much skill in making as the French Huguenot style (compare figure 2a). Its condition and quality, including the original engraving documenting ownership, is extraordinary and is partly explained by the survival of the early 19th century case supplied by Rundells in which the service has been stored for the last two hundred years. Photographs can not do justice so its inspection by the Reviewing Committee is crucial.

Waverley 3

The Norfolk toilet service is uniquely well documented as is the life style and the marital relations of the 8th Duchess for whom it was commissioned. It is a rare example of the bride's father providing a major capital investment in silver-gilt. It perfectly illustrates the importance of the levée. It is the largest surviving toilet service and is complete. Almost all the other surviving toilet services listed in Appendix I in UK public or privately accessible collections have been diminished by sale or inheritance. There are no publicly accessible toilet services in Cumbria, County Durham, Lancashire or Northumberland.

Appendix

Summary of related items in public/private ownership in the UK

Two of only three marked French Louis XIV period toilet services to survive are in British public and private collections.

Lennoxlove toilet service (17 pieces)

Silver-gilt, made in Paris 1650s-1670

Customized for Frances Teresa Stuart, Duchess of Richmond and Lennox (1647-1702), a celebrated beauty at the Court of Charles II

http://www.nms.ac.uk/highlights/objects_in_focus/lennoxlove_toilet_service.aspx

National Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh, Scotland

Queen Mary II's toilet service (23 pieces)

Silver-gilt, made in Paris and The Hague 1669-78, possibly a wedding present for Mary Stuart, later Queen Mary II in 1677

The Trustees of the Chatsworth Settlement, Derbyshire

London –made toilet services in British public and private collections

1673 Knole Toilet Service (18 pieces including mirror but no candlesticks)

Silver, made in London, the earliest surviving English made toilet service
Purchased by the Duke of Dorset following the death of his grandmother, the Countess of Northampton in 1750s
The National Trust at Knole, Kent

Circa 1680 Sizergh Toilet Service (14 pieces including mirror but no candlesticks)

Silver, made in London and supplied by Robert Smythier (1633-1689 possibly as a gift to the Strickland family from Charles II

<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O104866/the-sizergh-toilet-service-toilet-service-robert-smythier/>

The Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Circa 1680 1st Duke of Portland's Toilet Service (20 pieces including mirror and table candlesticks)

Silver, made in London, circa 1680
Private Collection

1683-4 Calverley Toilet Service (14 pieces including mirror but no candlesticks)

Silver, made in London and supplied by William Fowle (1658 – 1684)
1683-4, purchased second hand.

<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O10973/calverley-toilet-service-mirror-frame-fowle-william/>

The Victoria and Albert Museum, London

1693 Bastard Toilet Service (14 pieces)

Silver, made in London maker's mark PR, 1693 bearing the coat of arms of Bastard impaling Pollexfen for William Bastard (1667-1703) and his wife Anne (d.1723) heiress of Edmund Pollexfen (d.1710) of Kitley, Devon.
Private Collection.

1695 Brownlow Toilet Service (19 pieces)

Silver-gilt, made in London maker's mark PR attributed to Phillip Rollos, circa 1695

LOAN: GILBERT 623-642-2008

On loan to the Victoria and Albert Museum, London and now on loan to Belton House, Lincolnshire (National Trust)

1699-1700 Lady Acton's Toilet Service (14 pieces including mirror but no candlesticks)

Silver, made in London and marked by Isaac Dighton, 1699-1700 made for Mary, wife of Sir Edward Acton of Aldenham Hall, Shropshire
Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

1699 Bodington Toilet Service (11 items including mirror but no candlesticks)
Silver, made in London and marked by John Boddington, 1699, connected with Lyme Park; sold Sotheby's 1 June 2000 (204) present whereabouts unknown.

Circa 1700 Fox- Strangways Horner service (13 pieces including mirror but no candlesticks)
Silver-gilt, made in London and marked by Daniel Garnier, circa 1700
On loan to Hampton Court Palace from the Ilchester Trustees

1700 The Duke of Portland Toilet Service (23 pieces including mirror and table candlesticks)
Silver gilt, made in London and supplied by Pierre Platel, 1700
Private Collection, London

1701-1714 The Earl of Oxford's Toilet Service (21 pieces including mirror)
Silver-gilt, made in London and supplied by Pierre Platel, Nicholas Clausen and Benjamin Pyne, 1701-1714. Purchased from the patron second hand in 1714.
Private Collection on loan to Temple Newsam House, Leeds

1722 Kildare toilet service (28 pieces including mirror and pair of table candlesticks)
Silver-gilt, made in London by David Willaume the elder(1658-circa 1740) engraved with the arms of Robert Fitzgerald, 19th Earl of Kildare impaling those of his wife Lady Mary O'Brien. Ulster Museum, Belfast
<http://www.artfund.org/artwork/5550/the-kildare-toilet-service>

1724-5 Treby Toilet Service (29 pieces including mirror and pair of table candlesticks)
Silver, made in London, supplied by Paul de Lamerie 1724-1725 to George Treby (1685-1742), as a wedding gift to his wife Charity Hele in February 1725.
<http://www.ashmolean.org/ash/objects/makedetail.php?pmu=138&mu=149>y=asea&sec=&dtm=20&sfn=Material&cpa=1&rpos=1&cnum=&obj=&mat=Silver,%20wood,%20glass%20and%20bristle&ori=&date=&mar=&her=&cre=&num=&des=>
Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

1751 Elizabeth Duchess of Rutland's Toilet Service (13 pieces, no mirror and no candlesticks)
Silver-gilt, made in London supplied by Edward Feline and George Boothby, 1751 purchased for the Duchess of Rutland second hand from Rundell Bridge and Rundell who supplied the brass bound wooden case with their label 'Her Grace the Duchess of Rutland Gilt Dressing Plate'
Private Collection

1754-5 Lady Stamford's Toilet Service (28 pieces including mirror and pair of table candlesticks)

Silver, made in London and supplied by Magdalen Feline, 1754-5
Traditionally given by Lord Warrington to his daughter Lady Mary Booth on her marriage to Harry, 4th Earl of Stamford
The National Trust, Dunham Massey, Cheshire

1758-9 George III's Toilet Service (9 pieces no mirror but pair of table candlesticks)

Silver-gilt, made in London and supplied by Thomas Heming in 1758-9, engraved with the Royal Arms and cipher of George III.
Royal Collection 100232

1759-60 Lady Northampton's Toilet Service (22 pieces including mirror and pair of table candlesticks)

Silver-gilt, made in London and supplied by Magdalen Feline, for Anne, Countess of Northampton, daughter of the 4th Duke and Duchess of Beaufort
The Trustees of the Chatsworth Settlement, Derbyshire

1768 Watkins-Wynn Toilet Service (28 pieces including mirror and pair of table candlesticks)

Silver-gilt, made in London by Thomas Heming
National Museums of Wales, Cardiff, Wales

1771-2 Queen Charlotte's Toilet Service (11 pieces including mirror and pair of table candlesticks)

Silver-gilt, made in London as a private commission for Queen Charlotte and supplied by Thomas Heming
Private Collection and Royal Collection inventory numbers 48656, 100234.

Further bibliography

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