
Koopman Rare Art

Director's Choice – Timo Koopman Paul De Lamerie



With historic academic research such as Philip A. S. Phillips's 'Paul De Lamerie Citizen and Goldsmith of London, A study of his Life and Work A.D 1688-1751', Ellenor Alcorn's 'Beyond the Maker's Mark: Paul De Lamerie Silver in the Cahn Collection', and Christopher Hartop's 'Art and industry in 18th-century London English silver 1680-1760 from the Alan and Simone Hartman Collection' to name but a few, the story of Paul De Lamerie has in many ways already been told.

Our Director's Choice this week touches briefly upon some of this history but also looks at why his work is so extraordinary at times and to the clients that were commissioning these incredible creations. We are very fortunate to be current custodians of a wonderful group of his works, and we revisit the virtuosity and brilliance of this genius 18th century goldsmith by highlighting the finer details of these glorious objects.



William & Mary, Parliament offering the crown to William and Mary in February 1689; they were enthroned two months later.

Paul de Lamerie arrived in England with his Huguenot parents in or before 1689, having been baptized at s' Hertogenbosch in the Netherlands in 1688. Paul's father, Paul Souchay de la Merie was a Huguenot who left France following the Edict of Fontainebleau in 1685. He became an officer in the army of William III of Orange and moved to London during the Glorious Revolution. England had needed a Protestant King at that time and in William of Orange they found one. In 1703 Paul De Lamerie was apprenticed to the Huguenot goldsmith Pierre Platel, and after being admitted to the freedom of the Goldsmiths' Company, he registered his first hallmark and set up a workshop in Windmill Street, Soho, in 1712. He certainly was industrious, taking thirteen apprentices between 1715 and 1749 who paid premiums varying between £10 and £45. In 1716 he married Louisa Juliott, also a Huguenot, and by her had six children.

Little more of his personal history is known, although his career in the Goldsmiths' Company is comparatively well documented. By 1717, he is referred to as 'the King's Silversmith', but this success led to a confidence which might explain his wilful

contravention of the rules of the Goldsmiths' Company. He is recorded, as so many goldsmiths were at this time, in receiving a fine and a complaint for 'Duty dodging', as we refer to it today, a well-recognised practise of the 18th century.

'For making and selling Great quantities of Large Plate which he doth not bring to Goldsmith's Hall to be mark't according to Law.'

1717 was an important year for Lamerie for not only was he made Royal Goldsmith, but he also joined the livery of the Goldsmiths' Company and fourteen years later he was elected to the court of assistants. In 1743 he was appointed fourth warden and in 1747 second warden. That he never became prime warden was probably due to ill health.

From the outset he had wealthy clients such as the Honourable George Treby and the Duke of Sutherland. Among his more important later patrons were Sir Robert Walpole, Baron Anson, and the fifth Earl of Mountrath. A gradual expansion of his business culminated in his move in 1739 to considerably larger premises in Gerrard Street. His pre-eminent position in the trade is signified by the commission he received in 1740 from the Goldsmiths' Company to provide two of their most splendid pieces of ceremonial display plate, a silver-gilt inkstand and the famous rococo ewer and dish.



An Important Soup Tureen Formed as a Green Turtle
George II London, 1750. Maker's mark of Paul De Lamerie

Formerly in the Koopman Rare Art Collection and now in the Paul Cahn Collection
on loan to the St Louis Art Museum

Paul de Lamerie is certainly regarded as the greatest silversmith in 18th-century England, celebrated for bringing English silver to new artistic heights through his mastery of rococo design and technical innovation. His influence shaped both the aesthetics and the prestige of silverware in Georgian society.

Lamerie transformed silver from functional tableware into works of art that embodied wealth, taste, and innovation. His embrace of rococo design and technical brilliance made him the benchmark for silversmiths of his era, and his legacy endures as a symbol of 18th-century luxury and craftsmanship.

His workshop produced a vast output, often subcontracting to other silversmiths but still stamping pieces with his own hallmark. His name became synonymous with luxury and prestige, raising the market value of silver objects.

He amassed considerable wealth, owning numerous properties in Soho through his commissions by royalty and aristocracy across Europe. His silver was often displayed on lavish buffets in elite households, symbolizing status and cultural sophistication.

By 1723, Paul de Lamerie counted the nobility, the wealthier end of the middle class and the Russian court as his customers. Clients now included figures such as Sir William Trumbull, Lord Foley, the Countess of Berkeley, and Viscount Tyrconnel alongside several Members of Parliament with Sir Robert Walpole being his most notable client. Although Lamerie was being branded as the 'King's Silversmith', there is little to support the idea that he was actually fulfilling royal orders. He did supply silver to the Prince of Wales, but this was in reality commissioned by George Wickes.



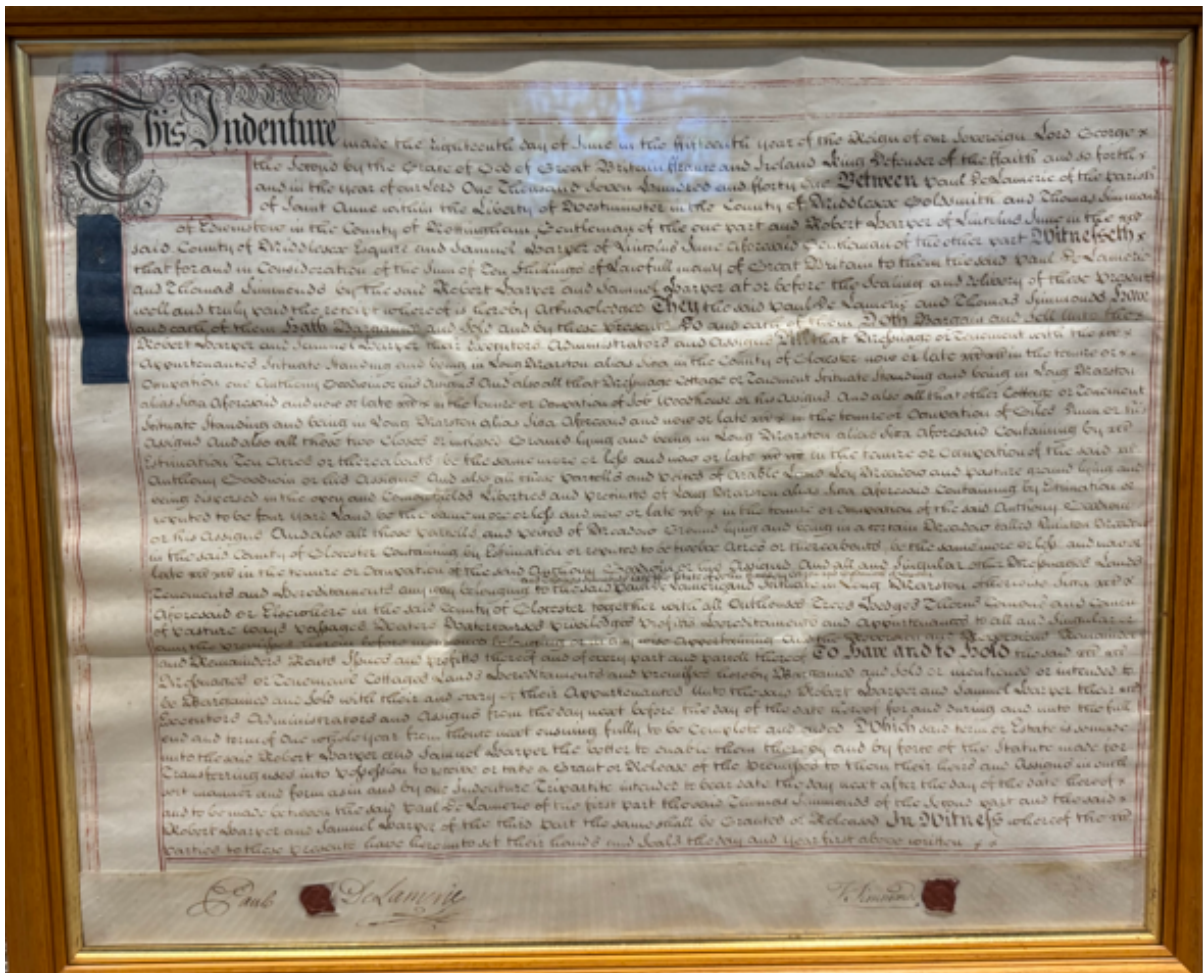
The Walpole Salver 1728 by Paul De Lamerie

©The Victoria & Albert Museum Collection

Unlike George Wickes, he does not appear to have been a fashionable retailer selling work he bought from 'outworkers'; no trade card of his has come to light, and only two groups of bills, none on printed bill head, have survived in Lamerie's hand. Yet we know Lamerie had a considerable workshop and as noted earlier during his career took on thirteen apprentices.

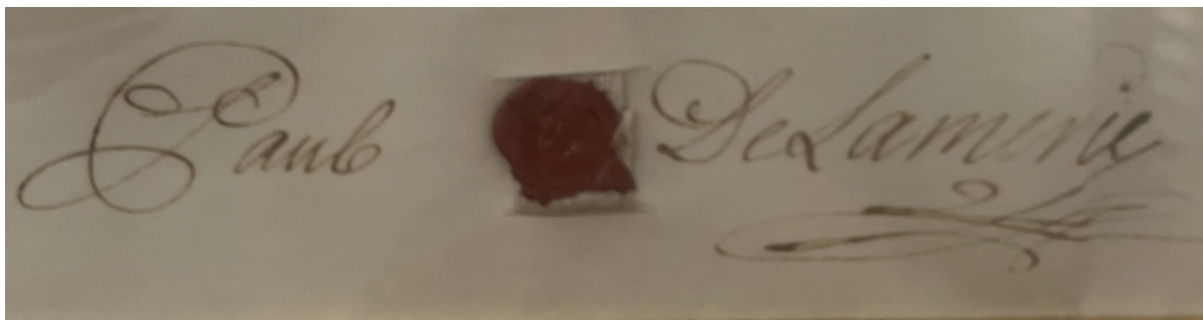
He worked in conjunction with other Huguenots like Paul Crespin, to whom he supplied finished wine coolers that formed part of the extensive service of plate supplied by Crespin to the Jewel House for the Earl of Chesterfield in 1727. Additionally, we know that between 1723 and 1728 he was in partnership with the engraver, William Gamble, who seems to have set himself up as a retailer with plush premises, evidently selling Lamerie's work.

It was under the tutelage of the most prestigious Huguenot silversmith, Pierre Platel (circa 1664 - 1719), following a ten-year apprenticeship, that Paul de Lamerie was able to establish himself amongst the elite in the new revolutionary sensibility – the Rococo style. Conceived to provoke a romantic sense of confusion and dream-like atmospheres, without renouncing the grandeur, theatrical scale and formal robustness of the Baroque, the rococo style treated natural subjects with a sense of whimsy and asymmetry. Emerging in the early 1730s and coming into full fruition in the middle of the decade.



We are fortunate to have in our collection an indenture for a property Paul De Lamerie owned with J. Simmonds.

The success that De Lamerie achieved as a silversmith is the result not only of his innovation of decorative techniques but also in his trade choices as a successful Georgian business owner. There is no doubt that at the peak of his career in the mid 1730's Lamerie's business would have been welcomed by the London jewellers, goldsmiths, turners, chasers and all specialists associated with the trade. Lamerie invested in property too and amassed an amazing portfolio. This in turn would have provided the financial stability needed if the patron took time in settling the costs of their grand commissions.



We present a group of wonderful objects that bear the touch mark of our famous goldsmith. These pieces with their provenance, asymmetry, magical details, subtle whimsy and recognised Manard Master signature, glorify all that is great and so pleasing about being in the presence of an object by Paul De Lamerie.



A George II Soup-Tureen & Cover

London, 1741, Maker's mark of Paul De Lamerie

Length: 45.1 cm, 17¾ in. Weight: 4,326 g, 139 oz.

This superb rococo soup tureen is oval in shape and rests on four fabulous lion's mask, claw-and-ball feet. The handles decorated in foliate and nautical motifs, issue from whimsical lion masks with lolling tongues. The main body applied with two rococo cartouches flanked by sprays of berried foliage and wheat ears together with demi-sheep masks below. The shaped gadrooned border supporting in turn the cover adorned with cast and applied shells, scrolling acanthus, eagles beaks and lion's masks. The handle with two lion snouts with acanthus tongues and a limpet shell in the centre.

The main body of the tureen engraved with a scratchweight '139-14'

The "Maynard Master" was an anonymous craftsman in Paul de Lamerie's workshop whose virtuoso modelling and chasing profoundly elevated the artistic quality of Lamerie's silver between about 1737 and 1745. His influence is visible in some of the most elaborate rococo pieces associated with Lamerie.

The identity of the Maynard Master remains unknown. He is named after a spectacular silver dish made for Grey, 5th Baron Maynard, now in the Cahn family collection. Scholars now believe he was one of Lamerie's craftsmen, but his distinctive style sets him apart from other artisans in the workshop.

The Maynard Master's 'hallmark' is found in his deeply sculptural decoration, with bold reliefs, naturalistic motifs, and dramatic asymmetry. His designs pushed Lamerie's silver into the full rococo style, with shells, scrolls, foliage, and playful putti, animals and even lighting and eagle's beaks. Our soup tureen displays

so many of these features. One only has to look to the sides of the tureen to see the most magnificent yet amusing lion masks. The cover with the characteristic eagle beak and animal masks together with the most magnificent rocaille shells. The whole sculpture keeps its fluidity with the most beautiful chasing.

The Maynard Master's contributions are considered the peak of Lamerie's output, distinguishing the finest pieces from more routine workshop products. His work demonstrates how collaboration and subcontracting in Lamerie's workshop could produce masterpieces that surpassed ordinary Georgian silver.

While Lamerie's name became synonymous with 18th-century English silver, the Maynard Master's artistry was crucial in defining its brilliance. His anonymous hand gave Lamerie's rococo silver its most dramatic and enduring character, ensuring that these works remain celebrated as the pinnacle of English silversmithing.

Provenance:

Christopher Beckett Denison (1825-1884), M.P. for the Yorkshire West Riding
Christopher Beckett Denison [+]; Christie's, London, 6 June 1885, lot 2112 (£37 to Phillips)
Anonymous sale; Sotheby's, London, 11 November 1982, lot 24.

E & C.T Koopman Ltd
His Excellency Mahdi Al Tajir
Koopman Rare Art
Alan & Simone Hartman Collection

Literature:

The Glory of the Goldsmith, Magnificent Gold and Silver from the Al-Tajir Collection, 1989, p. 112.

Exhibited:

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

The Paul Cahn Collection of Paul De Lamerie Silver – Museum of St Louis



The Maynard Dish

Formerly in the Koopman Rare Art Collection and now in the Paul Cahn Collection
on loan to the St Louis Art Museum

The Janssen Candlesticks



A Pair of George II Silver Candlesticks

By Paul de Lamerie

London, 1737

Weight: 1,424g, 45 oz 15 dwt Height: 20.5 cm, 8 1/4 in.

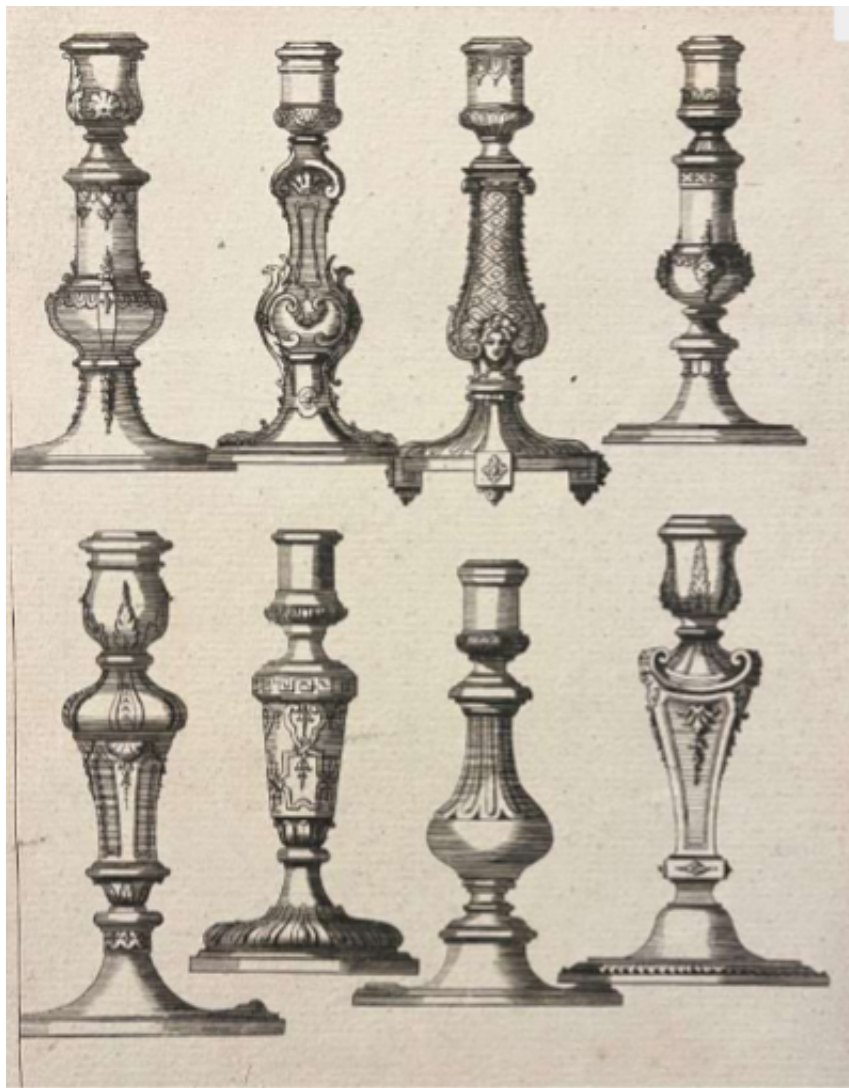
After a design of the Parisian artist Jean Berain, these candlesticks with their shaped cut corner square bases are cast and applied with lit torches, rocaille shells and foliate decoration. The base also engraved with a stemmed flower crest for the family repeated four times. The wells rising up to a frieze of quatrefoils, scale-work and rocaille shells. The knop at the bottom of the baluster stems with alternating rosettes and pearls. The pilastre stems rising to shell drapery and the capitals decorated with twisted scroll and leaf strapwork.

Provenance:

Sotheby's, London, 6th November 1997, lot 163

The Chen Collection, sold

Lyon & Turnbull, Edinburgh, 23 November 2008, lot 206



Jean Bérain the Elder, by or after 1680-1681, engraving and etching

The flower crest is that of Janssen, a family noted for their connoisseurship of silver. The likely patron for the original set of four candlesticks is Sir Theodore Janssen (1658-1748), a Dutch merchant who arrived England c. 1680 and was a founder and director of the Bank of England. Created a baronet in 1714, he was a noted financier supposedly worth 300,000 pounds. Implicated in the South Sea Bubble scandal, he was heavily fined by the House of Commons committee in 1721. His son Stephen Theodore Janssen was also based in London and may also have commissioned these, but sons Robert and Henry moved to Paris, where the latter is believed to have been the original patron of the important silver by Thomas Germain and others known to history as the Penthièvre-Orléans Service.



Sir Theodore Janssen and his sons; painting by William Hogarth.

The matching candlesticks from the original set of four were sold Christie's New York, 19th October 2004, lot 1062. A set of four salts by Lamerie engraved with the same crest are in the Farrer Collection at the Ashmolean Museum (Illus. Susan Hare, Paul de Lamerie, no. 78, p.122).



The Janssen Salt Cellars

London, 1737

By Paul De Lamerie

The Farrer Collection, Ashmolean Museum

The earliest examples of this Lamerie design were for Sir Robert Walpole in 1731, and support unmarked four-light tops (Schroder, *The Gilbert Collection of Gold and Silver*, 1988, pp. 204-206, cat. no. 50). Six candlesticks with two candelabrum branches of 1737 are at Woburn Abbey. Two sets of four sticks of 1737 and 1738 are in the Clark Art Institute (Wees, *English, Irish, and Scottish Silver at the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute*, 1997, cat. no. 375 and 376, with a note on the known versions of the model).

The Ellis Dishes



A Set of Three George II Silver Meat Dishes

London, 1745

Maker's mark of Paul De Lamerie

Weight: 2,314 g, 74 oz 10 dwt, Length: 33 cm, 13 in

The dishes rectangular with boldly sweeping incuse corners. The fine gadrooned border with shells and palmettes at intervals. These handsome dishes engraved with the coat-of-arms of Ellis. Each Dish engraved with the household inventory number and scratch weight. No. 13 / 26=17.5; No. 14 / 27=4.5; and No. 15 / 26=10

Provenance:

Welbore Ellis (1713-1802) to his great nephew
Henry Welbore Agar, 2nd Viscount Clifden (1761-17836) and by descent to
Henry Agar-Ellis, 4th Viscount Clifden (1863-1895) perhaps sold privately
George Dunton Widener (1861-1912) and by descent to his son (dishes no.14 and 15)
George Dunton Widener Jr. (1889-1971) (14 and 15)
Christie's New York, 29 April 1986, lot 175 (14 and 15)
Sotheby's London, 5 March 1998, lot 238 (14 and 15)
F. Gorevic & Son, Inc., New York (13)
Bonham's, London, 30 June 2010, lot 89 (13)

The arms are those of Ellis impaling Stanhope for Welbore Ellis (1713-1802), born Kildare, Ireland, as the sixth and youngest but only surviving son of Dr. Welbore Ellis (1661-1734), bishop of Kildare and from 1732 of Meath, and his wife, Diana Briscoe (d. 1739), the daughter of Sir John Briscoe of Boughton, Northamptonshire, and Amberley Castle, Sussex. Ellis attended Westminster School and Christ Church Oxford, graduating 1736. He served as M.P. for Cricklade, then for Weymouth, as well as Spokesman for the Admiralty and Lord Chancellor of the Exchequer.

He married in 1747, Elizabeth Stanhope (d. 1761), the only daughter of Sir William Stanhope. The couple lived at Tylney Hall, Hampshire, and at Pope's Villa, Twickenham, which Elizabeth had acquired from her father. Their entertaining invited comment from their waspish neighbour Horace Walpole. Ellis was created 1st Baron Mendip in 1794, the title passing to his great-nephew and heir, Henry Welbore Agar, second Viscount Clifden, who assumed the surname, Ellis.

Baron Ashburton's Sauceboats



A Pair of George II Silver Sauce Boats

London, 1735

maker's mark of Paul De Lamerie

Weight: 1,101 g, 35 oz 10 dwt, Length: 20.9 cm, 8 1/4 in.

The elegant and fluid sauce boats rest on four lions paw feet which in turn rest on scalloped shells. These feet adjoin the main body with raised lozenges. The bodies raised to a wonderfully bold reeded wire dressed with scrolls and shells to the sides. The bodies flat-chased with strapwork, shells and acanthus décor. The scrolled handles with delicate Huguenot drops and resting on the rim with a trefoil and the main body with a sexfoil. The front engraved with the monogram 'AA' under a baron's coronet for Baron Ashburton.

Provenance:

Probably The Property of a Gentleman, (A.P Lloyd and Edward Brooke); Christie's London, 2 May 1887, lot 115 (£48 11s 7d to Bone).

Property of a Gentleman, sold Christie's, London, 29 November 2007, lot 554

The cypher is that of the Barons Ashburton, perhaps added by Louisa Caroline Baring (1827-1903), second wife of William Bingham Baring, 2nd Baron Ashburton (1799-1864)



The Mitchell Salver

A Superb George II Salver London, 1739

Maker's mark of Paul De Lamerie

Weight: 645 g, 20oz 10 dwt Diameter: 24.5 cm, 9.63 in

The arms are those of Mitchell, probably for Andrew Mitchell (1708-1771), of Edinburgh.

The salver shaped-circular, on three scrolling feet, engraved with the coat-of-arms and chased with rococo motives and shells.

Provenance:

Christie's, London, 23 June 1976, lot 104

Manny Davidson Collection

A kettle engraved with these coat-of- arms, also marked for de Lamerie, London, 1739, was sold Christie's, New York, 16 April 1999, lot 204.



Sir Andre Mitchell (1708–1771), diplomatist, born at Edinburgh on 15 April 1708, was the only surviving son of William Mitchell, of an Aberdeenshire family, minister of St. Giles's, Edinburgh, and one of the king's chaplains for Scotland. Mitchell received part of his education at the university of Edinburgh. Before he was twenty-one, he married his cousin, Barbara Mitchell, an only daughter, and heiress of the lands of Thurnston in Aberdeenshire. She died about 1729, having given birth to an only daughter, who did not survive infancy. At the time Mitchell was studying for the Scottish bar, but the event affected him so deeply that he never afterwards resided in Scotland for any length of time. After several years spent in foreign travel, he was entered at Leyden University 5 Oct. 1730, and having formed at Paris an intimacy with Montesquieu, he settled in London in 1735 and studied for the English bar. He was elected a member of the Royal Society in March 1735, and was called to the bar at the Middle Temple on 12 May 1738. In 1741 he was served, in right of his wife, heir to the Thurnston estates. In the following year the Marquis of Tweeddale [see Hay, John, fourth Marquis], on becoming secretary of state for Scotland, appointed him under-secretary. Quin the actor, in conversation with Mitchell, hinted that his official employment was simply that of Will helping Jack to do nothing (Walpole, v. 235), but with the breaking out of the rebellion of 1745 Mitchell's office became no sinecure. His functions ceased in 1747 with the abolition of the Scottish secretaryship of state. But he was afterwards consulted by the government respecting the affairs of Scotland, and the Duke of Newcastle aided him in what proved to be his successful candidature for Aberdeenshire. He was elected as a staunch whig in 1747. He was an intimate friend of James Thomson,

the poet of the 'Seasons,' who, dying in 1748, left Mitchell one of his executors. He spoke occasionally in the House of Commons, and in 1751-2 he was at Brussels as one of the British commissioners appointed to negotiate a commercial treaty with Austria and the Netherlands. From 1755 to 1761 he was M.P. for the Elgin burghs, but during most of the period he was absent from England, having been appointed in 1756 British envoy to Frederick the Great.



Thainstone House, Inverurie

Mitchell reached Berlin just before the breaking out of the seven years' war and the formation of an Anglo-Prussian alliance. Frederick and he became strongly attracted to each other. Mitchell was admitted to confidential intercourse with the king, whose appeals for a strict fulfilment of the engagements which England had entered into with Prussia were warmly supported by Mitchell in his correspondence with his government. Frederick willingly acceded to Mitchell's application, made in pursuance of instructions from home, to be allowed to accompany him in his campaigns, and he was often by the king's side in the battlefield and under fire. The clear and instructive narratives of military operations sent home by Mitchell interested George II, and their value has been recognised by Carlyle. Mitchell's reports of Frederick's frank and lively conversations with him abound in striking traits and anecdotes of the great king. Some remarks in one of his despatches appear to have given offence to the elder Pitt, and he was recalled, General Yorke being sent to supersede him. But Frederick insisted that Mitchell should remain, and without quitting Berlin he resumed his functions as envoy. This was in 1758, and in 1759 he was raised to the rank of plenipotentiary. While attached to Frederick and approving of his policy, Mitchell did not hesitate to speak his mind freely to him in regard both to politics and to religion. They had more than once discussions on the providential government of the world, in which Frederick did not believe, while Mitchell advocated the orthodox view. In the intervals of campaigning Mitchell learnt German, one of his earliest teachers being Gottsched, whose attack on Shakespeare for neglecting the unities he repelled with considerable wit (Carlyle, vii. 317). Mitchell's acquaintance with the rising German literature of the time was much greater than that of Frederick, on whom he urged its claims to royal recognition (ib. ix. 154).

Lord Bute, on becoming prime minister in 1762, aimed at bringing the seven years' war to an end, and discontinued the subsidies to Frederick, who wrote in that year to one of his correspondents: 'Messieurs the English continue to betray. Poor M. Mitchell has had a stroke of apoplexy on hearing of it.' There was now a diminution of the king's confidential intercourse with Mitchell, who had become the envoy of a government unfriendly to Frederick. In 1764, peace having been restored to Europe, Mitchell revisited England. He had been re-elected for the Elgin burghs in 1761, and continued to represent them, at least nominally, until his death. In 1765 he was invested, but not installed, a knight of the Bath (Foster, p. 252). In the following year he returned as envoy to Berlin. But as Frederick rejected Chatham's proposal of a triple alliance between England, Prussia, and Russia, which Mitchell was instructed to urge on him, the old intimacy of the king and Mitchell remained in abeyance. Mitchell's later despatches contain severe animadversions on Frederick's debasement of the coinage and general fiscal policy.

Mitchell died at Berlin on 28 Jan. 1771, and Frederick is said to have shed tears as he witnessed from a balcony the funeral procession. He was buried in a Berlin church, in which a year or so afterwards a bust of him was placed at the instance of Prince Henry, Frederick's brother. Mitchell is described as strongly built, and rather above the middle height. His portrait at Thurnston is that of a bold, straightforward, and most sagacious man. He is said to have been taking in his manner, but rather blunt. Carlyle speaks of him as 'an Aberdeen Scotchman creditable to his country; hard-headed, sagacious, sceptical of shows, but capable of recognising substances withal and of standing loyal to them, stubbornly if needful ... whose Letters are among the perennially valuable Documents on Friedrich's History.' The anecdotes of Mitchell, given by Thiébault, some of which are often quoted, are not to be relied on when Thiébault is repeating the gossip of others. Mitchell himself, however, told him, he asserts, that when Frederick was least satisfied with England, Mitchell was reproached by the government at home with not reporting Frederick's bitter sarcasms on their policy, and that in reply he declared his determination to resign rather than play the part of tale-bearer.

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