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# Koopman Rare Art

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**Directors Choice – Timo Koopman**

**The Scarbrough Sauceboats**

These sculptural vessels epitomise the high rocaille style created by Nicholas Sprimont. They also demonstrate the close ties between the modelling of silver and porcelain and the interconnected business relationships between a small group of leading silversmiths working around Compton Street in Soho in the 18th century. Sauceboats of this quality exist in a few museum collections around the world. This jewel-like pair has quality, provenance, and exquisite modelling, making these an easy Director's Choice.

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**A Pair of George II Silver-Gilt Sauceboats**

*London, circa 1745*

*By Nicholas Sprimont or Paul Crespin*

*Length: 18.4 cm, 7.25 in*

*Weight: 890 g, 28 oz. 10 dwt.*

*The crest is that of Thomas Lumley-Saunderson, 3rd Earl of Scarbrough K.B. (b.c.1691-1752).*

Each boat-shaped is on a shell-shaped spreading foot cast and chased with bands of shells, seaweed, and rocaille. The fluted bodies with scalloped rims, also with a similar ornament. The scroll handles are fluted to imitate a shell and each sauceboat is engraved on the side with a crest within the motto of the Order of the Bath together with an earl's coronet above. Each sauce boat is also engraved underneath with scratch weights 14=11 and 13=10.

**Provenance:**

Thomas Lumley-Saunderson, 3rd Earl of Scarbrough K.B. (b.c.1691-1752), of Sandbeck Park,  
Yorkshire, then by descent to his son,

Richard Lumley-Saunderson, 4th Earl of Scarbrough (b.c.1725-1782), of Sandbeck Park,  
Yorkshire

A Superb Table Service of Gilt Plate...Property of the late Earl of Scarbrough, deceased, brought from his Lordship's seat at Sandbeck in Yorkshire; Christie's, London, 17 June 1785, lot 35 or 36  
(both lots £15 to Jacobs).

Christie's, New York, 21 April 1998, lot 234.

**Literature:**

M. Snodin ed., *Rococo: Art and Design in Hogarth's England*, London, 1984, p. 115.

B. Carver Wees, *English, Irish and Scottish Silver at the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute*,  
New York, 1997, p. 168. n. 5.

C. Hartop, *The Huguenot Legacy, English Silver 1680-1760*, from the Alan and Simone Hartman  
Collection, London, 1996, p. 219, n. 3.

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**Nicholas Sprimont:**

Sprimont was apprenticed as a silversmith to his uncle and godfather, Nicholas Joseph Sprimont, at Rue du Pont 16. He arrived in England probably early in 1742, as he married Ann Protin of Kensington on the 13 November that year at Knightsbridge Chapel.

His surviving hallmarked pieces of silver are rare, and all lie between 1742 and 1747. The best known are the two pairs of marine salts of 1742, the dishes of 1743, and sauceboats of 1743 -4, all in the Royal Collection. His largest pieces known are a jardinière of 1745 (Christie's, 15 February 1905 and Rovensky Collection, Parke-Bernet, 19 January 1957) and the Ashburnham centrepiece or covered basket of 1747 (Christie's, 24 March 1914, now Victoria and Albert Museum). Another important item is the tea kettle of 1745 in the Russian Royal Collection (E.A

Jones, *The Old English Plate of the Emperor of Russia*, Plate XLIX). To read more about Sprimont see his biography on our website [here](#).

Sprimont went on to co-found the Chelsea Porcelain factory, setting it up in c.1744 with the jeweller and fellow Huguenot Charles Gouyn. They worked in partnership until around 1748, when Sprimont took complete control of the company.

The set of four Rockingham sauceboats and stands below have strong similarities with our sauceboats, suggesting Sprimont as the likely maker; the sauceboats are similarly unmarked; however, the stands are fully marked for Sprimont, London, 1746.



Sauceboat, Stand and Ladle, Nicholas Sprimont, 1746–47, London. Courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston ©

Below are another pair of sauceboats that bear Nicholas Sprimont's hallmark for London, 1745. They are characteristic of the Rococo style with extraordinary c-scrolled handle. These sophisticated objects were supplied to Sir Edward Bellamy who was a banker, Lord Mayor of London, and Governor of the Bank of England. The Bellamy family crest is featured on the thumb piece of the ladles with which the sauce was served and by the cast and applied cartouches engraved with the family coat-of-arms. The ladles constitute an exceptional addition to these objects, as very few ladles with shell designs also bear the marks of the maker. The subtle flat-chasing, which forms the background to the sides of the central bodies of the sauceboats, might well have been seen on the masque of the host's tablecloth, which constituted a fabulous continuation in decoration. The sauce boats sit on an intricate pierced base, resembling a basket decked and adorned with daisies, roses, and jasmine cascading from the main body.



Pair of Sauceboats By Sprimont 1745 - A Private Collection

As mentioned above, Sprimont diversified his work into porcelain production, venturing into this new artistic production with a creative mind, experimenting with shapes and forms and interchanging them, as exemplified by a few surviving porcelain sauce boats. Sprimont translated a number of his designs for silver into works in porcelain, as discussed by Dr Bellamy Gardner in his article 'Silver shape in Chelsea Porcelain', (published in *The Antique Collector*, August 1937, p. 213). For example, the below gravy boat in the Victoria & Albert Museum Collection, dated 1746, with similar design elements to the silver sauceboats above such as the scrolled handle and the festoons of flowers, fruit and leaves moulded in relief.



Chelsea porcelain, ca. 1745-1746 Victoria and Albert Collection©

Further influence of silver designs on the porcelain of the time is also seen in a Derby sauceboat in the Victoria and Albert Museum collection, illustrated by Christopher Hartop, op. cit., p. 218.



Derby sauceboat in the Victoria and Albert Museum

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### **The Compton Street Connection:**

A study of Sprimont's oeuvre in silver shows a close relationship with fellow Huguenot silversmith Paul Crespin (1694-1770), whose workshop was also located in Compton Street. There is compelling evidence to attribute sauceboats of this form to either silversmith.

A pair of sauceboats, almost identical to our ones but with the mark of Crespin, hallmarked for 1746, are in the collection of The Sterling and Francine Clarke Art Institute, Williamstown, Massachusetts. Beth Carver Wees, *op. cit.*, p. 167 also notes that similar sauceboats were also produced by another Huguenot silversmith, Pez  Pilleau, whose son Isaac married a Jane Crespin, possibly Paul's daughter.

It is thought that either Sprimont worked as a modeller for Crespin, prior to registering his own mark and setting up as an independent silversmith, or that there was an exchange of casts and models between the two, and indeed a wider circle of silversmiths, as shown by a pair of candlesticks by Sprimont of 1745, also in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, which are identical to a pair by Paul de Lamerie, of 1747. The influence of the French master silversmith Fran ois-Thomas Germain is evident from a sauceboat, once in the Portuguese Royal Collection, illustrated by Hartop, *op. cit.*, p. 218, from G. Bapst, *L'Orf verrie Fran ais   la Cour de Portugal au XVIIIe si cle*, Paris, 1892, pl. XIV, fig. 50.

As Ellenor Alcorn points out, *op. cit.*, p. 162, the links with Crespin are strong. Similar cast coral and shell ornament is found on a small teapot by Crespin of 1740, now in the Hartman Collection, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Alcorn also notes similar decoration on a Crespin coffee pot of the same year advertised by Spink in the *Connoisseur* in 1946. Crespin and Sprimont collaborated on the Prince of Wales's Neptune centrepiece. Although the piece is struck with Crespin's mark, the similarity with Sprimont's later work, including the other pieces by him for the Marine Service, has led scholars to include this piece in his list of works.

For a discussion of the possible relationship in the work of Sprimont and Paul Crespin see A.G Grimwade, 'Crespin or Sprimont?', *Apollo*, August 1969



The museum of Fine Arts of Houston, Texas, a pair of sauceboats made by Paul Crespin in 1752-3 of identical design and previously in the Koopman Rare Art Collection.

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### **Thomas Lumley-Saunderson, 3rd Earl of Scarbrough**

Born around 1691, the 3rd Earl was the fourth son of Richard Lumley, 1st Earl of Scarbrough, and brother to Charles, 2nd Earl, James, and John Lumley. He briefly attended Eton College for a year between 1706 and 1707. He married Lady Frances Hamilton, daughter of George Hamilton, 1st Earl of Orkney in 1724 having inherited the estates of his cousin James Saunderson, M.P., 1st Earl of Castleton in 1723, when he adopted the name Saunderson. Before his parliamentary career he had entered the army in 1715 but left in 1718 at the request of Lord Castleton. In 1722, he was elected as M.P. for Arundel and later served as an envoy to Portugal until 1723. After resolving his debts, including substantial liabilities to his elder brother, Lord Scarbrough, in 1724, he returned to England in early 1725 and was one of the commoners chosen to revive the Order of the Bath.

He was elected without opposition as M.P. for Lincolnshire in 1727 and applied for a peerage as Lord Castleton's heir, but his request was unsuccessful due to King George II's reluctance to grant peerages. He joined the opposition and consistently voted against the government, frequently speaking on matters related to the army and foreign affairs. He was re-elected unopposed for Lincolnshire in 1734 and continued to align with the opposition. In 1737, he was among the



Members of the House of Commons who were consulted by the Prince of Wales regarding an application to Parliament for an increase in his allowance. He expressed support and spoke in favour of the increase, which earned him the position of treasurer to the Prince in 1738.

In 1740, he succeeded to the earldom of Scarborough after the suicide of his elder brother, leaving him an inheritance of £20,000, but the family estates went to his younger brother to his great disappointment. After the fall of Walpole's government, Scarborough, along with the other servants of the Prince, supported the new government. He lost his post upon Frederick's death. The Earl died in 1752 and was succeeded by his son Richard Lumley-Saunderson, 4th Earl of Scarborough (b.c.1725-1782). After his death, the family faced financial difficulties and had to sell the contents of Lumley Castle, including the plate, at an auction held by James Christie in 1785.



Lumley Castle, County Durham

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All works shown, unless otherwise indicated, are available to view and purchase  
in our gallery located in 12 Dover Street, London, W1S 4LL

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