

---

# Koopman Rare Art

---

**Directors Choice – Timo Koopman**

**The Medlycott Candlesticks**



**Four George II Candlesticks London, 1744**

**Maker's mark of John Cafe**

*Height: 9 1/4 in. (23.5 cm.) high, Weight: 110 oz. 8 dwt. (3,436.5 gr.)*

This week's Director's Choice focuses on a wonderful set of four rococo candlesticks. The early 18th century designs such as those of Bérain's (as seen below) influenced and reflected the type of ornament that was associated with the patron's candlesticks.

Here with Medlycott's candlesticks the iconography is clear, a series of allusions to Venus the goddess of love with shells, water and scales all references to her. The Cafes, both John and William were candlestick specialists, taught by James Gould another specialist and from a long line of candlestick makers that started with Joseph Bird at the end of the 17th century. Their production was prolific and continued until 1757. The Medlycott candlesticks however, are so far removed from anything else that I have seen by the Cafes in the past, that I wonder if they were executed by another goldsmith such as James Shruder or perhaps John Jacob and then retailed by John Café who would have been approached by Thomas Medlycott because of their reputation.

There is a pair of candlesticks in the Ashmolean Museums that demonstrate a similar mindset of the goldsmith that date to 1740 that bear the touch mark of John Jacob.

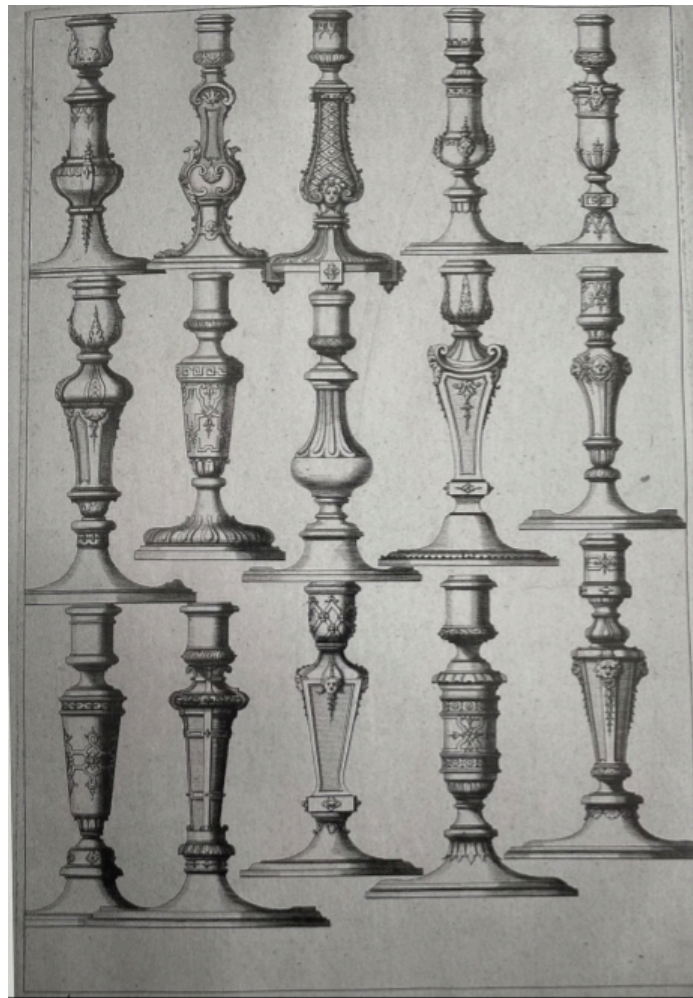


*John Jacob 1740-42 - Ashmolean Museum*

Each of the Medlycott candlesticks on a triangular base, cast with shells and scrolls, the knopped baluster stem similarly cast and engraved with fish scales, the shaped circular wax pans with rocaille on reverse, top of base engraved with the Medlycott's coat-of-arms, a engraved with the family crest on the sconces.

Provenance:

Thomas Medlycott (1697-1767), and then by descent  
 Sir Herbert Medlycott, Bart. Of Ven House, Somersetshire;  
 Christie's, London, 28 April 1910, lot 43 (to Crichton)  
 With James Robinson Inc., New York  
 Gift of Martha Baird Rockefeller, Christmas 1958..



John Bérain 15 designs, engraving. C' 1711 (Victoria and Albert Museum)

### Thomas Medlycott (1697-1767)

Baptised on the 22nd October 1697, Thomas was first son of James Medlycott, M.P., of Ven House by his wife Anne Howard. He was educated at Middle Temple and married before 1730 to Elizabeth (d. 15 June 1741), daughter of Anthony Ettrick of High Barnes, county Durham. Thomas Medlycott was Commander of hawkers and pedlars, Jan.-Sept. 1742, of taxes Sept. 1742-June 1744.

During the first half of the 18th century the representation of Milborne Port was contested between the Harvey and Medlycott families, as a result of which the Harveys went bankrupt and the Medlycotts became impoverished. When Newcastle became first lord of the Treasury in March 1754 Thomas Medlycott was in receipt of a secret service pension of £600 p.a., which he still held when Newcastle resigned in May 1762. The story of his parliamentary career during these years is one of pathetic attempts to ingratiate himself with Newcastle, with a view to securing the continuance, or if possible, the increase of his pension. His letters were humble, his professions of devotion boundless: 'all I mean upon my honour', he wrote, 31st Dec. 1755, 'is to free myself from any influence but yours, in whose cause I am embarked and will ... continue so to my dying day'. And on 25 May 1762, after Newcastle had resigned, Medlycott thus acknowledged the latest instalment of his pension: 'I hope God has given me a grateful heart, and that I shall show upon all occasions how sincerely I am etc.'

No secret service accounts are extant for the Bute Administration, and it is not known

whether Medlycott continued to enjoy his pension. Nor is there any evidence as to his political conduct: he appears neither in Fox's list of Members favourable to the peace preliminaries nor in any list of the minority against them. That he still retained some regard and gratitude for Newcastle is shown by his letter of 8 Apr. 1763:4

"I did myself the honour to call at your house as soon as I was able to crawl and indeed before I could well get up your steps ... The reason of my waiting on you was to inquire after your Grace's health and to assure you of the fidelity of etc."

Medlycott died 21st July 1763



**Ven House**

Ven House in Milborne Port, Somerset, England is an English manor house, and a Grade I listed building. A hamlet of Ven or Fenn existed in the mid-thirteenth century. By the sixteenth century the manor belonged to the Carent family, who sold it to Sir Edward Carteret in 1679. When Sir Edward died, his son, Sir Charles Carteret, mortgaged the property to the Londoner Thomas Medlycott and subsequently sold it to Thomas' brother, James. (Victoria County History, Somerset, 1999)

Construction of a smaller William and Mary style house was completed in 1698–1700 the house was enlarged around 1725–30 for James Medlycott by Nathaniel Ireson, who retained the west front of the earlier house. It stands on an artificially raised terrace and is surrounded by grounds that were laid out at the time by Richard Grange. It was altered and extended by Thomas Cubitt and Decimus Burton in 1835–36.

The house passed through the Medlycot family through the 18th and 19th centuries, until they sold much of the estate between 1918 and 1925. The house itself was let to a succession of tenants until Sir Hubert Mervyn Medlycot sold it in 1957.

The house, which has a rectangular plan of 7 bays by 5 bays, is built of red brick in Flemish bond, with local Ham stone dressings. The north and south fronts are divided by two giant Corinthian pilasters, placed to suggest a central block of three bays. The roof is hipped with Welsh slate behind balustraded parapets. Attached to the house and in matching style were north west and north east pavilions. Along the south side of the house is a terrace balustraded to match the house.

When the house was first built the main entrance gateway was some 400 metres (1,300 ft) to the north of the house and linked East Street and The Old Road (Dorset). In the 19th century this was superseded by London Road, which split much of the parkland from the house,[3] and the Ham stone gate piers and wrought iron gate were relocated to their current position 35 metres (115 ft) north west of the house.[9]

The 1836 building work by Decimus Burton, which provided a new drawing-room for Sir W. Medleycott included the construction of the corridor linking Ven House and the Orangery, and the Orangery itself. Also constructed around 1836 were the stabling and several other outbuildings, which are attached to east side of the house.

The Ven estate contains a total of 12 listed buildings, eight listed at the highest grade, I, and four listed at Grade II. The structures listed at Grade I are: the house, the orangery, and a corridor linking the two entrance gates, two pavilions and walling to the north-west and north-east and a garden terrace and stables to the east. The structures listed at Grade II are: two sets of garden walls, a bridge and a garden seat.

The house originally had around 70 hectares (170 acres) of land including 6 hectares (15 acres) of formal gardens and pleasure grounds, and around 64 hectares (160 acres) of parkland. They were originally laid out by Richard Grange between 1720 and 1739. The house still has almost 14 hectares (35 acres) of gardens and grounds, including a stream which forms part of the River Yeo. To the south east of the house is a walled garden which was a kitchen garden or plant nursery, but is now largely ornamental.

---

For more information on the availability and price of any treasures we mention, please visit our website, email or call us.

Check all the News  
and Discover our  
Latest Acquisitions  
on our Website!

**Visit Our Website**



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

For all enquiries please do not hesitate to call or email on:

020 7242 7624 / [info@koopman.art](mailto:info@koopman.art)



@Koopman.Art



@KoopmanRareArt



Koopman.art

---

*Copyright © 2025 Koopman Rare Art, All rights reserved.*

12 Dover Street

W1S 4LL, London

United Kingdom

Phone: +44 20 7242 7624

Email: [info@koopman.art](mailto:info@koopman.art)

---

This email was sent to <<Email Address>>

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

Koopman Rare Art · 12 Dover Street · London, W1S 4LL · United Kingdom