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# Koopman Rare Art

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The Koopman Rare Art Illustrated Directory of  
Gold & Silver – Timo Koopman

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## C is for Cumberland



*Ernest Augustus, Duke of Cumberland and King of Hanover*  
*by George Dawe, oil on canvas, circa 1828*

The collection of treasures we currently have here at Koopman Rare Art that at one time graced the tables and sideboards of The Palace of Herrenhausen in Hanover inspired me to focus on the plate owned by this remarkable character Ernest Augustus Duke of Cumberland and later King of Hanover. To this day, both major institutional and private collections consider items with this provenance amongst the most important within their collections; not only for the fine quality and provenance of the items but the remarkable story they tell. We are very proud to present five triumphs of the decorative arts that were part of his collection and help paint a better picture and understanding of the majesty of this period and the incredible heights achieved by the royal goldsmiths competing to lure that next glorious commission.

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*Currently in The Koopman Rare Art Collection*

**Ernest Augustus, the Duke of Cumberland's Tazzas**

A Royal Pair of George III Tazzas

London, 1804

Maker's mark of Diby Scott & Benjamin Smith II

Bearing the coat-of-arms of Ernst Augustus Duke of Cumberland

Also stamped with the royal retailers mark of Rundell Bridge & Rundell

Engraving attributed to Walter Jackson

Diameter: 31 cm, 12.2 in

Weight: 3,700 g, 118 oz 19 dwt

The stepped pedestal trumpet feet with acanthus leaves and acorn border. The sloped borders of the tazzas with cast and applied vine leaves, tendrils and bunches of grapes edged by reeded bands. The flat surface engraved and chased with a band of Vitruvian scrolls within a string of pearls. The centre beautifully engraved with the royal coat-of-arms of Ernest Augustus the Duke of Cumberland.

The underside engraved with the initials EAF's for Ernst Augustus Fideikommis (heirloom).

On the death of King William IV and the accession of Queen Victoria in 1837, the Palace of Herrenhausen, then part of the British territory of Hanover had to be split from the British crown, as under Salic law Queen Victoria was barred accession to the Hanoverian throne.



The Palace of Herrenhausen, Hanover

This set in motion very difficult relationships between Queen Victoria and her uncle, the now King of Hanover. His seizure of not only the palace but contents, and the considerable collection of British Royal silver and works of art within. Unthinkable at the time, these tense Royal relationships almost ended in public lawsuit.

As part of this seizure of the Palace and contents H.R.H Ernest Augustus I Duke of Cumberland and King of Hanover added the small, discreet but very telling monogram to the silver. E.A F (Ernest Augustus Fideikommiss) This really was his way of stating his right to the silver and that it now formed part of his collection.

The collection was wide and varied and included European as well as English silver. Perhaps most famously the impressive series of 72 candlesticks. They were delivered over an extended period with the first two dozen delivered on 16th September in 1744. From their original order it was intended to recycle old silver from the Royal Jewel House. To this end, for this commission and others, including the remarkable commission of five eight-light chandeliers after a design by William Kent, it is recorded that 'A salver, a wine fountain and cistern, pastry dishes, a night lamp and stand, one hundred and twenty plates and dishes, a spittoon, further plates and dishes, tea kettles, a chamber pot, a standish (inkstand), five keys and a warming stand' were supplied to Behrens with close control taken over the weight and purity of the silver.



*Formerly in the Koopman Rare Art Collection*

**King George I's Royal Candlesticks A Highly Important set of six George I Royal candlesticks**

London, 1718

maker's mark of Nicholas Clausen.

These too became part of the Duke of Cumberland's Service by descent.

Various sets of these candlesticks and other items by Behrens for the Hanoverian Court still survive. An impressive group of table wares and one of the chandeliers can be seen in The Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Two others of the chandeliers are within the collection of the National Trust and are displayed in situ at Anglesey Abbey, Cambridgeshire. The silver stayed at the Palace of Herrenhausen until shortly after the Seven Weeks war in 1866 and the Prussian annexation of Hanover. The plate survived intact as it has been hidden in a vault within the Royal palace, despite the palace being looted by Prussian troops.



*Royal Chandelier at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston*

With the family's deposition from the throne, although allowed to keep the titular title of King of Hanover, they fled to Penzig, Austria and to the villa of Gmuden, where the plate would latterly be kept. The collection descended through the family until the death of Ernest Augustus II and was sold by his son Ernest Augustus III in 1924 to the Viennese dealers Gluckselig and to Crichton Brothers of Bond Street London, arguably the most important dealers in antique silver in Europe at the time. It was then split by them with items variously being sold to collectors and institutions alike.

The King died on 18 November 1851 after an illness of about a month. He was mourned greatly in Hanover; less so in the United Kingdom, where The Times omitted the customary black border to its front page and claimed, "the good that can be said of the Royal dead is little or none." Both he and Queen Frederica rest in a mausoleum in the Berggarten of Herrenhausen Gardens. A large equestrian statue of King Ernest Augustus may be found in a square named after him in front of Hanover Central Station, inscribed with his name and the words (in German) "To the father of the nation from his loyal people." It is a popular meeting place; in the local phrase, people arrange to meet unterm Schwanz or "under the tail".

Although The Times denigrated Ernest's career as Duke of Cumberland, it did speak well of his time as King of Hanover and of his success in keeping Hanover stable in 1848: Above all, he possessed a resolute decision of character, which, however unfortunately it may have operated under different conditions, appeared to extraordinary advantage at the crisis of continental thrones.

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## Cumberland Silver Currently in the Koopman Rare Art Collection



### An Important Pair of Royal George III Wine Coolers

Silver-gilt

London, 1801

Maker's mark of Joseph Preedy

*Height: 27cm, 10.6in.*

*Width, Handle to Handle: 25.5cm, 10in.*

*Weight: 8200g, 263oz*

Each wine cooler heavily cast and chased with fluted and laurel bases. The bodies with acanthus-decorated lower bodies below friezes of Bacchanals, openwork grapevine garlands and the rim linking rams' head handles.

Each with detachable fluted collars and liners. The bases engraved with the Royal garter below a Royal Ducal coronet for Ernest Augustus the Duke of Cumberland, later the King of Hanover.

Provenance:

Ernest Augustus, Duke of Cumberland (1771-1851), from 1838 King of Hanover

Ernest Augustus, Duke of Cumberland was the fifth son of George III and Queen Charlotte, and like many of his brothers including the Prince of Wales was an avid patron and collector of fine plate. An extreme conservative, he was feared by the British public for his reactionary views. On the death of his brother William IV, Ernest's niece Victoria became Queen to public acclaim, and he succeeded as King of Hanover.

Six coolers and stands of this model from the Cumberland plate were shown by Crichton, London, in 1924.



The figures of Bacchus and Silenus as being taken from Bernard de Montfaucon's *L'Antiquité Expliquée et Représentée en Figures* (Paris, 1719/24), while the small putti are drawn from the designs of Lady Elizabeth Templetown, an amateur artist who supplied designs to Wedgwood and Bentley, and the dancing figure with a tambourine from one of the Marlborough Gems, published in 1788.



#### **A Royal Pair of George III 'Barrell' Wine Coolers**

London, 1800

Maker's mark of William Holmes

*Weight: 4,556.7 g, 146 oz 10 dwt*

*Height: 19.4 cm, 7.63 in*

These wine coolers with their original capes and liners are an incredibly rare model in the barrel form. They have more conforming lion masks to their sides with drop-ring handles. They are engraved with royal arms and supporters, and additionally engraved with the Royal badge. The all-important engraving of EAF's can be found to their undersides.



#### **An Important Set of Four George III Silver-Gilt Royal Candlesticks**

London, 1814

Maker's mark of Paul Storr

*Height: 22.86 cm, 9 in.*

*Weight: 3,185 g, 102 oz*

This set of four candlesticks were part of an extensive silver collection of Ernest Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, fifth son of George III. In 1837 he succeeded to the crown of Hanover and took with him a large quantity of English Royal silver. This displeased Queen Victoria who made a claim for the return of many of the royal pieces. He ignored the claim and then had all the silver engraved with his initials 'E.A.F' meaning they were entailed to his estate.

Provenance:

Princess Augusta Sophia (1768- 1840), second daughter of George III  
H.R.H. Ernest Augustus, Duke of Cumberland and King of Hanover (1771-1851)

Literature:

"Old English Plate from the Duke of Cumberland's Collection," *The Connoisseur*, November 1924, p. 253 (a pair only is mentioned, referring either to two from the present set or the pair now at the Victoria & Albert Museum)

The Inventory of The Royal Plate of Hanover

While it is exceedingly rare to have such a complete and accurate early record of any collection of silver, let alone a Royal collection, we are lucky to have such a listing for the Royal Plate of Hanover. The document, known as the Inventory of Silver of the Royal and Electoral Court, Hanover, 1747 (British Library Mss. ADD. 42227), offers a 'Complete inventory of the court silver comprising all his Royal Majesty our most gracious Lords utensils of Gold and Silver, at present in the Royal and Electoral Silver-Chamber at Hanover From the Inventory of 1728, the Additional Inventory of 1730 and the Inventory of the year 1739, Brought together and made up with the additions and alterations to Midsummer 1747, by the Grand Court Commissary Fredrick August Bartels, Hanover and was compiled in German by the Grand Court Commissary Frederick August Bartels and signed by him, along with Christian Schultz and John Henry Mecklenburg, the Silver Keepers. The document was later translated to English.

In addition to descriptions of the various services and individual items of plate from the Hanoverian court, the inventory also notes weights, recorded in the German measure for precious metals, namely the pound, mark and loth. As the pound weight given does not correspond to the weight of those extant items, it would appear as though the German word for "mark" had been mistranslated into "pound." The vast quantity of plate documented in the inventory provides a glimpse into the lavish lifestyle enjoyed by the Hanoverian court with, for example, at least five distinct silver services, each heavier and more extensive than the previous, with a combined weight of 86,000 troy ounces.

As befitting such an important Royal court, the collection also included an array of silver furniture. The inventory lists nine various tables weighing 5,200 troy ounces and eight mirrors weighing over 3,500 troy ounces as well as chairs, guéridons and andirons. Additionally, lighting featured heavily in the collection, and included five magnificent silver chandeliers, made to the designs of William Kent by Balthasar Friedrich Behrens in 1737 (see Christie's, London, 7 July 2011, lot 52 for one).

Although the exact number of candlesticks in the collection is unknown, it is thought that approximately 300 were likely in use at the Royal court at any one time. Another set of six candlesticks matching the present examples were sold by order of the executors of the late Lady Trent at Christie's, London, 23 June 1976, lot 107.

The later history of the royal plate of Hanover

The threat of looting by Napoleon motivated King George III to transfer much of the Royal Plate of Hanover to London. Sent by way of St Petersburg, much of the silver and silver-gilt was eventually put on display in Windsor Castle. The Kent-designed chandeliers, for

example, were painted in situ in the Queen's Drawing Room and the Ballroom by C. Wild and published by William Henry Pyne (1769-1843) in his three volume work *The History of the Royal Residences*, first printed in 1819. The Hanoverian plate together with the British Royal silver was the centrepiece of 'Their Majestie's Grand Fête at Windsor Castle', as described in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for 1805:

'This evening their Majesties gave a most magnificent entertainment at Windsor Castle. It has been in contemplation since they first went to reside in the Castle: when his Majesty was determined to have what is generally termed among good old English customs, a housewarming; and, to give it in the grandeur of a King, we assert that the expenditure cannot have cost less than 50,000l. It may truly be said that it was his Majesties fête; for, everything was done by the direction, and under the superintendence [sic], of his Majesty.'

'The assembled guests admired the new works and the wealth of riches brought from Hanover. Much comment was made of silver on show throughout the castle. "The whole service of plate displayed this night was supposed to be the most magnificent in Europe. Messrs Hancock and Shepherd have been employed for a considerable time past hanging the silver chandeliers from Hanover."

The silver returned to Hanover once the threat posed by Napoleon's forces had passed. Upon the 1836 death of King William IV, the thrones of Great Britain and Hanover were separated after almost 123 years. Under the German Salic law of succession, the throne of Hanover could only be held by a male monarch. Therefore Queen Victoria, the daughter of King William IV's brother, the Duke of Kent, was barred from the throne of Hanover. The throne went instead to her eldest surviving uncle Prince Ernst Augustus, Duke of Cumberland and King of Hanover (r.1837-1851). His son King George V of Hanover (r.1851-1866, d.1878) succeeded him but was deposed during the Seven Weeks War in 1866.

Although Hanover was sacked by Prussian troops the Royal plate was preserved in a concealed vault camouflaged by heaps of lime rubble. The King and his family fled to Austria. King George V's son revived the title of Duke of Cumberland and deprived of the throne of Hanover, lived in exile at Gmunden in Austria, where he built a country house. Towards the end of his life, he was in the process of negotiating the sale of much of the Royal Hanoverian silver. A report in *The Times* on 21 June 1923 entitled 'The Cumberland Silver' comments that 'Nothing has been settled about the Cumberland silver. The Duke has apparently asked for tenders, and several groups of dealers are negotiating on the subject, each of them as quietly as possible, for even part of the collection would be regarded as a great prize'.

And finally one of the most iconic pieces of the nineteenth century.....





### **A Highly Important George IV Shield for The King of Hanover**

London, 1823

Philip Rundell for Rundell, Bridge & Rundell

*Diameter: 35 ¾ in (89.7 cm)*

*Weight: 723 oz (22,490 g)*

The circular shield is cast and chased after the design by John Flaxman with scenes from the eighteenth book of Homer's Iliad. The reverse has four rings at the rim and centre for attaching leather straps. Engraved on the reverse with a cypher, coat of arms and with the inscription: "The Shield of Achilles Designed And Modelled By The Late John Flaxman R.A.

Executed And Published By Rundell Bridge And Co./ London 1838".

#### **Provenance:**

Rundell Bridge & Rundell, London until 1838

Ernest Augustus Duke of Cumberland and King of Hanover and then by descent in the Hanoverian Royal family in Hanover and Austria until sold circa 1923

Josef van Mierlo, circa 1940 and then by descent in the van Mierlo family Essen, Belgium

Mahdi Al Tajir 20th May 2008

#### **Literature:**

E. Alfred Jones, *The Gold and Silver of Windsor Castle*, 1911, p. XLVII Exhibition catalogue: John Flaxman, R.A., 1979, pp. 30-31 Christopher Hartop, *Royal Goldsmiths:*

*The Art of Rundell & Bridge 1797-1843*, 2005, pp. 99-118

The arms and cypher on the reverse are those of Ernst Augustus, King of Hanover.

The spectacular shield of Achilles is the supreme example of early nineteenth-century English silver and is a triumphant collaboration between the great firm of Rundell and Bridge and the leading designer John Flaxman. "The silver-gilt Shield of Achilles, designed and modelled by one of the greatest English sculptors of the regency, is an outstanding instance of a synthesis of the fine and decorative arts. The designer, John Flaxman was the most illustrious of the Royal Academicians associated with Rundell, Bridge & Rundell

..." (Shirley Bury and Michael Snodin, 'The Shield of Achilles by John Flaxman R.A., Sotheby's Art at Auction 1983-4, 1984, pp. 274-83).

Flaxman was "the most famous British sculptor and the brightest star in the Rundell & Bridge establishment of architects" (Christopher Hartop, see Literature, p. 104). From 1805 he had been supplying the firm with drawings of figures and friezes which were then employed on various designs for large pieces of silver such as wine coolers and vases. He modelled only one piece for the firm, however, the shield of Achilles. Flaxman's design is an interpretation of the shield wrought for Achilles by the god Hephaestus at the request of Thetis after Achilles lost his armour which he had lent to Patroclus; it having been seized as the spoils of war by Hector.

"Then first he formed the immense and solid shield Rich various artifice emblazed the field".

Alexander Pope's translation of the Iliad

The Renaissance concept of massive display chargers or shields decorated with scenes celebrating great military triumphs had long been out of fashion but was revived by Philip Rundell and John Bridge by 1810, the year in which Flaxman submitted his first designs for this great project. It was to be another seven years before the design was completed to his satisfaction. In 1817 he made the model for the shield himself which was then cast in plaster. The artist Sir Thomas Lawrence was also presented with a plaster version of the shield. He admired and treasured it to the point he decided to mention Flaxman's masterpiece in his eulogium to the latter describing it as "that Divine Work, unequalled in the combination of beauty, variety and grandeur, which the genius of Michael Angelo could not have surpassed".

Three or possibly more bronze versions were made and finished by the chaser William Pitts junior and finally in 1819 a silver version was made. It was this shield which was then gilded and sold to George IV in 1821 to form the centrepiece for the buffet of plate at his coronation banquet. Flaxman was initially paid one hundred guineas for '4 models and 6 drawings' and in 1817 he received £200 on account and a further £525 in the following year (John Culme, Important Gold and Silver, sale, Sotheby's, London, 3rd May 1984, lot 124).

Five silver-gilt shields in all were made. The first, mentioned above, which is in the Royal Collection and a further example which was acquired by Frederick Augustus, Duke of York and is now in the collections of the Huntington Library and Art Gallery, San Marino, California; both shields are marked for 1821-22. Two further shields both marked for 1822-23 were sold to Hugh Percy, 3rd Duke of Northumberland in 1822 for £2,100 and to William Lowther, 2nd Earl of Lonsdale in 1823 and are in the collections of His Excellency Mohamed Mahdi Altajir and the National Trust at Anglesey Abbey respectively. The present shield which is marked for 1823-24 was sold to Ernst Augustus, Duke of Cumberland and later King of Hanover and for many years its existence was overlooked.

The reason for this shield being 'lost' springs from the belief that only four were actually made and in part this error must arise from the description by the German Ludwig Schorn of his visit in 1826 to the workshops of Rundell's: "to the silversmiths Rundell & Bridge who

kept a splendid shop not far from St. Paul's on Ludgate Hill. Here I was shown the shield of Achilles cast in silver and chased after a plaster model which Flaxman had executed to the King's commission ... the shield has been cast four times in silver for the king, the Duke of York, the Duke of Northumberland and Lord Lonsdale. Gilded the article costs £2000, ungilded £1900" (exhibition catalogue, see Literature, pp. 30-31). This gives the impression that only four shields were made although Schorn must have been looking at the fifth example which is the one sold to the Duke of Cumberland. In 1911 E. Alfred Jones stated that an example had been made for the King of Hanover: "A shield of exactly the same design and of equal size but two years later in date is in the possession of the duke of Cumberland". Jones must have seen the shield as he makes it clear in the acknowledgements that he was given access to the Hanoverian royal collection. Christopher Hartop realised that there were five shields but did not know of the whereabouts of the Cumberland shield in 2005.

The shields were not made to a commission but were a speculative exercise and this shield remained in Rundell's shop on display as a magnificent testament to the supreme skills of their craftsmen and designers. The company, who were excellent self-publicists, would have used the shield as an advertisement to maximum advantage. It was probably sold to the Duke of Cumberland after his accession to the throne of Hanover in 1837 and probably in 1838 as attested by the inscription on the reverse of the shield. The arms must have been engraved after 1839 as they incorporate the Order of St. George of Hanover which was instituted by Ernst Augustus in April 1839. The new Hanoverian monarch acquired massive quantities of plate in 1838 amounting to over 180 kilos and including six thirteen light candelabra and two centrepieces. This great display of plate would have played an important role in the establishment of the new king and the image of splendour that he wished to create for himself. Unlike his brother George IV, he did not acquire plate for the specific occasion of his coronation.

The shield appears in a photograph of the Hanoverian royal plate on display in Vienna in 1868. There is no record of the sale of the shield but much of the Hanoverian royal plate was disposed of in 1923 after the death of Crown Prince Ernst Augustus II by the dealers and auctioneers Samuel and Max Glückselig of Vienna and Crichton Brothers of London and it is probable that it was sold at this time.



Flaxman in his design adhered closely to the description given by Homer. The design of the shield revolves around the central figure of the Apollo is his chariot of the sun. The frieze, arranged in a succession of groups, depicts the marriage procession and banquet, the quarrel and judicial appeal, the siege and ambushade and military engagement, the harvest, the vintage, the shepherds defending their herds of cattle from the attack of lions and a Cretan dance. The great stream of the ocean is represented by the surrounding border.



*John Flaxman © National Portrait Gallery, London*

Flaxman's drawings for the shield are in the collections of the British Museum and what is believed to be the original cast for the shield is in the Sir John Soane Museum, London.

Allan Cunningham (The Lives of the most eminent British Painters, Sculptors, and Architects, 1833, vol. III) suggested that Flaxman used a translation of the Iliad when working on his design although this was contradicted by Maria Denman, Flaxman's sister-in-law, who insisted that he had worked from the original Greek text.



*Ernest Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, When King of Hanover, by Franz Kruger. Oil on canvas, 1840*

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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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