
Koopman Rare Art

Director's Choice – Timo Koopman Vessels for Punch



Baron Guernsey's Queen Anne Monteith Bowl London, 1703 by Isaac Dighton

One of our most recent acquisitions is the splendid Baron Guernsey Monteith bowl, it has made me focus on our current magnificent collection of vessels made for punch. Our collection dates from 1695 to 1744 and highlights the importance and popularity of this 'new world' concoction.

Punch remained the tippable of choice for English aristocrats for hundreds of years. The spirits consisted of tea, sugar, citrus and nutmeg and were all expensive ingredients. Lemons were scarce and costly, and became status symbols in Northern Europe, one of the reasons they are found in so many Dutch still life paintings. In the late 17th century London, a three-quart bowl of punch cost the equivalent of half a week's living wage. Commissioning one of these silver vessels was the perfect way to show your education, prosperity and status. My Director's Choice this week focuses on three exceptional punch bowls, each exemplifying the skill, craftsmanship and

lengths their owners went to create these table ornaments that served both in function and beauty.

Punch Bowls



The Punch Party - A Midnight Modern Conversation, 1733 by William Hogarth

The earliest punch bowls were made of delftware or silver, the latter particularly favoured by the upper class, which considered silver serving pieces to be important status symbols. An intriguing early version of the punch bowl is of course the silver Monteith bowl, believed to have been conceived in England in the 1680s. Still a well-known shape today, the Monteith bowl is recognizable by its distinctive geometric sculpted rim, which one 17th-century writer claimed mimicked the scalloped bottom of the cloak worn by a “fantastical Scot,” Monsieur Monteigh, hence the derivation of the bowl’s name. Here is entry from the diary of Anthony Wood, Oxford, December 1683:

This yeare in the Summer came up a vessel or bason notched at the brims to let drinking glasses hang there by the foot so that the body or drinking place might stand in the water to cool them. Such a bason was called a 'Monteigh' from a fantastical Scot called 'Monsieur Monteigh' who at that time or a little before wore the bottomms of his cloake or coate so notched UUUU.



The coat-of-arms on the inside of the bowl which was commissioned in 1703 when Heneage Finch was created Baron Guernsey

Originally, the vessel was designed for cooling wine glasses—when the bowl was filled with cold water, glasses could be chilled upside down, with their stems nestled in the notches of the rim. Often, the rim was detachable, which allowed the bowl to do double-duty as a punch bowl. The ice for these bowls would have been gathered throughout the winter from frozen lakes and rivers and stored in the specially designed ice houses.

The need for practical spacers for the wine glasses would have derived from earlier versions without this detachable rim where expensive glasses would have been prone to damage when rolling together.

This leads me to the first of our examples commissioned for Heneage Finch when he was created Baron Guernsey in 1703. Of all the makers of Monteiths that are recorded only a few can be credited with production in any number and one of these is Isaac Dighton whose mark is found on this Monteith. He was based Gutter Lane, now home of the Goldsmith's Hall.



Detail of the drop-ring handle from the Baron Guernsey bowl

Isaac, son of Henry Dighton of Bristol was apprenticed to William Browne, a Citizen and Haberdasher, on 26th May 1665. He became a Freeman by service on 7th June 1672. Throughout his career, he does not appear to have been fined by the Goldsmiths' Company for substandard goods. For the 1692 Poll Tax, he was assessed in Saddlers Hall and Gutter Lane Precinct, with a wife, two menservants, a maidservant, and a further unidentified servant. He paid the excess of 10s per quarter, as his estate was worth more than £300. For the 4s Aid of 1694, Captain Isaac Dighton had a rack rent of £24 and stocks of £100. He was clearly successful as both a silversmith and businessman and from the quantity of plate surviving bearing his hallmark you can see that the quality of his work is always superior.

In 1697, he registered a largeworker's mark for the Britannia Standard with an address in Gutter Lane. In 1703, he signed the Petition against Foreigners seeking freedom by redemption. Such was the competition from the Huguenot influx into the Soho area.

He was buried at St Vedast, Foster Lane on 28 February 1707. Isaac Dighton bound five apprentices in the Haberdashers' Company between 1673 and 1684. Two of them became free, Henry Denham and John Smithsends, with the latter registering a largeworker's mark in 1697.



Heneage Finch, Baron Guernsey and 1st Earl of Aylesford, PC, KC (c. 1649 – 22 July 1719)

Earl of Aylesford, in the County of Kent, is a title in the Peerage of Great Britain. It was created in 1714 for the lawyer and politician Heneage Finch, 1st Baron Guernsey. He had already been created Baron in 1703. Finch was the younger son of Heneage Finch, 1st Earl of Nottingham and the great-grandson of Elizabeth Heneage, 1st Countess of Winchilsea.

Lord Aylesford's eldest son, the second Earl, represented Maidstone and Surrey in Parliament. In 1712, he married Mary Fisher, daughter of Sir Clement Fisher, 3rd Baronet. Through this marriage Packington Hall in Warwickshire came into the Finch family. Their son, the third Earl, sat as a Member of Parliament for Leicestershire and Maidstone. His eldest son, the fourth Earl, represented Castle Rising and Maidstone in the House of Commons, and after entering the House of Lords on his father's death, served as Captain of the Yeomen of the Guard from 1783 to 1804 and as Lord Steward of the Household from 1804 to 1812.

His second but eldest surviving son, the fifth Earl, was a Tory Member of Parliament for Weobly. His son, the sixth Earl, represented South Warwickshire in Parliament as a Conservative. His grandson, the tenth Earl, assumed by Royal licence his grandmother's maiden surname of Knightley in addition to that of Finch. His son, the eleventh Earl, served as Lord Lieutenant of the West Midlands. As of 2015, the titles are held by the latter's son, who succeeded in 2008.

The Hon. Charles Finch, younger son of the third Earl, was Member of Parliament for Maidstone.

His son Charles Griffith-Wynne (who assumed the surname of Griffith-Wynne in lieu of his patronymic), was Member of Parliament for Caernarvonshire. His son Charles Wynne sat as Member of Parliament for Caernarvon.



The family seat is Packington Hall, near Meriden, Warwickshire.

PUNCH

It is common belief that the word ‘punch’ can be traced to the old Hindustani “paunch” meaning five, a reference to the five classes of ingredients in punch recipes; distilled spirits, water, sugar, citrus, and spices. There are many references to punch in the East India Trading Company’s correspondence, and the reports of travellers to their factories or trading posts on the Indian subcontinent. The earliest English reference to punch is found in a letter sent on September 28, 1632 by Robert Addams, one of the companies men-at-arms wishing Thomas Colley, a factor, good luck on an upcoming trip to Bengal. Addams wrote,

“I am very glad you have so good company to be with all as Mr. Cartwright. I hop you will keep good house together and drinke punch by no allowance.” (P.R.O., 1892)

When the East India Company’s first trading mission set sail in 1601, its four ships and 480 men carried 30,000 gallons of beer, a like amount of cider, and 15,000 gallons of wine weighing some 420 tons. Considering that the capacity of the 4 ships was only 1,160 tons, allocating over 1/3 of the capacity to alcohol was less than ideal. Spirits rapidly became more popular, initially through the spice trade of the East India Company. Arrack a distilled alcoholic drink typically produced in India, Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia was used. It is made from the fermented sap of coconut flowers or sugarcane, and also with rice grain or fruit depending upon the country of origin. Given the Company’s involvement in the spice trade, it is not surprising that many of the punches made aboard the ships amongst the naval officers consisted of nutmeg too. Later on Rum was also to

be become the popular spirit used in the new world concoction.

Interestingly, although it was not until the 19th Century that the Royal Navy finally stamped out scurvy by instituting universal rations of lime juice, the Elizabethans had known that citrus fruits were a cure. Being part of the punch mixture, it would have kept the tars (sailors) from illness.

Sailors were called 'Jack Tar' as it's thought to be because of the tarpaulins they wore. The tarpaulin was a canvas which contained tar to render it waterproof.

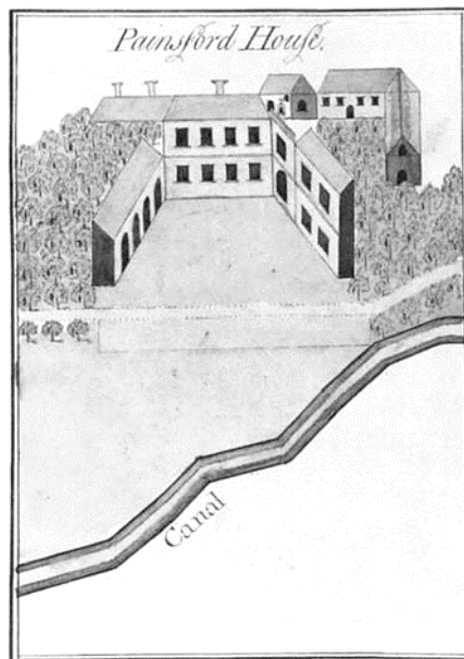


The second of these splendid Monteith bowls is without a detachable rim and from the last part of the 17th century and commissioned by the Kellond family to grace the tables of Painford House in Devon. As a member of parliament Charles Kellond would have wanted to elevate his social and political status with this magnificent example by Isaac Liger.



This monteith is circular and rests on a rope gadrooned foot. It has a scalloped rim decorated with scrolls and cherub masks. The bowl is chased with eight lobes, one engraved with a coat-of-arms. The plain lobes are in contrast to the stippled decoration between and the sides with two lion's mask drop-ring handles.

Huguenot silversmith, Isaac Liger, was first recorded in London in the early 1700s, though there is no record of the apprenticeship. His freedom from the Broderers' Company was granted in September 1704, and he entered his first mark the following month, giving his address as Hemings Row, where he remained for the rest of his life. By 1706, Liger had received a commission from the earl of Warrington for chapel plate at Dunham Massey; this was the beginning of an association that was to continue for more than twenty years and he became the chief supplier of plate to George Booth, 2nd Earl of Warrington (1675-1758). Choice articles for the table or personal use comprise the greatest portion of Liger's known works. Most of these items are relatively plain, while others are densely engraved with designs in the style of Simon Gribelin.



Drawing of Painsford House circa 1750

Charles Kellond (1660-1695) of Painsford House Devon was a member of parliament for Totnes between 1680-81. He married twice, firstly to Margaret Drewe in 1684, the daughter of Thomas Drewe of The Grange, Broadhembury in Devon. Their son John III Kellond died in 1712 at the age of 22 unmarried; his three sisters predeceased him; therefore, Painsford was inherited by his Aunt Susanna Kellond (1676/7-176), wife of William Courtenay of Tremere, Lanivet in Cornwall.

The last of our punch bowls is perhaps the finest rococo example I have ever had the pleasure to handle. The Bolingbroke bowl is so imposing and as an almost sphere provides a canvas for the lively chased and engraved decoration that adorn the shoulders and for the extravagant cartouche that encloses the coat-of-arms.



The Bolingbroke Punch Bowl 1744 by Edward Feline

Edward Feline whose touch mark is on this bowl was the son of a Huguenot tailor Peter Fellen, who was established in the parish of St Martin in the Fields. The young Edward was apprenticed to goldsmith Augustin Courtauld in 1709 and joined his master's household in Church Court adjacent to that parish church. Courtauld had completed his own apprenticeship with Simon Pantin, another Huguenot goldsmith from Rouen, and registered his first sponsor's mark at Goldsmiths' Hall in 1708, the year in which he married Anne Ribouleau. In 1709 the Courtaulds' first born Anne arrived; followed eleven years later by her younger brother Samuel. Anne married John Jacob, a goldsmith from Metz; Samuel married Louisa Perina Ogier, daughter of a Spitalfields silk merchant. In 1720 Edward Feline married Renée Barbut at the Huguenot Chapel in West Street and registered his own sponsor's mark from an address in Rose Street, Covent Garden.



Henry St. John (1678-1751), 1st Viscount Bolingbroke.

Henry St. John (1678-1751), 1st Viscount Bolingbroke. Henry St. John was a writer and a close friend and confidant of Alexander Pope. He was Secretary of War from 1704, resigned and returned to office in 1710 as Secretary of State to the Northern Departments and at this time was created Viscount Bolingbroke. By the end of Queen Anne's reign, he had amassed great power and influence, but this all ended on her death and as a Jacobite he fled to France. While in exile he wrote philosophical essays which were published posthumously and in 1725 he was pardoned, and he returned to England for a period although he never held political office again. He continued to be involved with the Jacobite cause and went into exile again ten years later, returning to England at intervals to stay with Alexander Pope. He returned in 1744, the year in which this bowl was made, and settled in Battersea and died there in 1751.

Punch from arrack in the East Indies and rum from the West Indies on its early arrival in the social coffee houses of London was hugely popular with both the patrons and owners of the establishments as it lay outside the law and hence was non-taxable.

You may talk of brisk claret, sing praises of sherry;
 Speak well of old hock, mum, cider, and perry;
 But you must drink punch if you mean to be merry.

A bowl of this liquor the gods being all at,
 Though good we should know it by way of new ballad,
 As fit for both ours and their Highnesses' palate.
 (Purcell, Blow, & Walsh, ca. 1730)



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