



Sebastian & James Crespell

A Gadrooned Rim Soup Tureen

George III, London, 1767

Maker's mark of Sebastian & James Crespell overstriking Augustine Le Sage

Length: 41 cm, 16.1 in

Weight: 3,220 g, 103 oz 10 dwt

The cover with the crest for Walker of Redland, Bristol

Artist description:

No record of his apprenticeship or freedom, or his presumed brother James, who Heal records as working silversmiths, Whitcomb Street, Leicester Fields, from 1762 to 1773; and James Crespel alone in 1779. The mark which is clearly theirs must have been entered in the missing largeworkers' register somewhere about 1760. It seems highly probable that they may have learnt their trade in the establishment of Edward Wakelin, in view of the connection revealed by the ledgers of that firm (Garrard MMS, Victoria and Albert Museum). They first appear in the general workmen's ledger in 1769 as supplying plates and dishes, which seem to constitute their greatest output throughout from 1778 to 1806 a series of parallel ledgers survive kept by the Crespels and Wakelin and Taylor and their successors. These record the raw metal used issued by the Crespels and the wrought plate supplied back by them, annotated with the client's name for whom ordered, or the word "Shop", presumably for stock in Panton Street. In 1782 a definite financial connection between the Crespels and Wakelin and Taylor occurred, when the latter paid £380 for 'expenses, alterations and improvements done by them at the workshop no 25. Corner of Oxendon Street'; they further bought 'an annuity of £100 per Annum on both their lives and the survivor' for £1000 and lent them £1321.7s.3d. 'by their Joint Bond bearing 5% pr Annum with collateral security of all their Tools, Fixtures and Implements in Trade of all

denominations'. It would seem therefore, that from this date, the Crespels were virtually owned by Wakelin and Taylor, and likely that all pieces bearing their mark went through the latters' hands. From 1788 the latters' ledger account is headed 'James Crespel', which may indicate Sebastian's death or retirement. The ledgers finish in October 1806 without any apparent successor to the business. James Crespel had at least four sons he apprenticed in the trade