

CHRISTIE'S

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THE DAVID LITTLE COLLECTION *of early English Silver*

Christie's London, 3 December 2019



Lot 126 A Charles I silver ewer, London, 1625, maker's mark TH with shell or mullet below, possibly for Thomas Holland
Estimate: £150,000-200,000



Detail from *Still Life with a Turkey pie*, Pieter Claesz (b.c.1597-1660), 1627, © Rijksmuseum

London – On 3 December, Christie's will offer *The David Little Silver Collection of Early English Silver* in London, comprising 26 very rare works to have survived the loss and destruction of most Tudor and Jacobean Silver during the Civil War. The most extraordinary survivals are the 'Armada Dishes' which were rediscovered

buried in a barn in the 19th century (estimate: £150,00-200,000,

illustrated right). This remarkable collection presents the market with a unique opportunity to acquire some of the last and most valuable objects in private hands. A celebration of beauty and craftsmanship, it also provides an evocative opportunity to compare with Old Master still life paintings, bringing to life the silver objects and vessels depicted. David Little's working life was spent in Nottinghamshire, where he built collections of early oak furniture, pewter and pre-Civil War silver over the last 30 years with passion and connoisseurship. An important item in the collection is a cup formerly in the collection of J. Pierpont Morgan (estimate: £180,000-220,000, *illustrated left*). Estimates range from £4,000 to £220,000.



Harry Williams-Bulkeley, International Head of Silver, Christie's: *"The sale of the David Little Collection is an extraordinary opportunity for collectors of the rarest English silver. Timothy Schroder, author of 'English Silver before the Civil War, The David Little Collection', published in 2015, summed it up perfectly when he described the collection as "remarkable and well-chosen...assembled in an age when such things are increasingly hard to come by." To have sought out a group of such high quality works over twenty five years is a great achievement. Many of the lots have passed through hands of eminent collectors, dealers and antiquarians. Now new collectors have the chance to add their names to these impressive provenances.*

When I was researching the collection I realised I had seen objects related to many of the pieces in still life paintings at Christie's and in museums. As a silver specialist I am always looking at how artists of the time represent silver. It was an enjoyable task to seek out paintings which show how the masters of the genre appreciated the work of the silversmith. Collectors today can appreciate the beauty of the pieces through the eyes of a 17th century artist."

David Little noted: *"My interest in Elizabethan and Stuart social history began early in my life and I began collecting 16th and 17th century antique pewter. At that time I owned a pewter spouted ewer with a similarity of design to the Hamilton silver ewer, which I found fascinating. I spent some time comparing the relationship between the two metals, their manufacture, their design and how they complemented each other in use throughout the Elizabethan and Stuart periods. I met Alastair Dickenson when my collection was quite small and we soon formed a close relationship. I respected his knowledge and enthusiasm to build a focused collection, insisting on the rarest and highest quality pieces relevant to the period, attempting to include as many different shapes and forms as possible. I am extremely grateful to Timothy Schroder who kindly agreed to write the fascinating book on my collection, putting it in context with the history of the period. I now look forward to sharing the pleasure that these rare examples have brought me with other collectors."*

Highlights include:



Lot 118 A James I parcel-gilt silver beaker, London, 1618, maker's mark HB conjoined, possibly for Hugh Blackhurst or Henry Blackmore
Estimate: £40,000-60,000



Detail of *Still Life*, by Cornelis Krus (b.c. 1619/20-1660)
© Christie's Images, Bridgeman Art Library



Lot 125 A James I silver basket, London, 1612, maker's mark Three Mullets
Estimate: £120,000-180,000



Detail of *Still Life of Peaches*, follower of Andre Bouys (1657-1740) circa 1700 © Bridgeman Art Library



Lot 111 An Elizabeth I silver tazza London, 1571, maker's mark indistinct
Estimate: £120,000-180,000



Detail of *Still Life*, circle of Georg Flegel, 17th century ©The Netherlands Institute for Art History, The Hague



Lot 117 A James I silver-mounted coconut cup, unmarked, probably Scotland, circa 1600-1620
Estimate: £15,000-25,000



Detail of *Still Life*, by Willem Claesz. Heda (1594-1680), 1652, © Bridgeman Art Library



Lot 112 A James I silver-mounted shell casting bottle, unmarked, circa 1600
Estimate: £4,000-6,000



Detail of *The Paston Treasure*, circa 1663 © Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery, Bridgeman Art Library

To view the full collection please see the e-catalogue: [here](#)

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Notes to Editors

David Little and Christie's:

David has held two previous sales at Christie's. In 2001 Christie's offered his collection of Oak Furniture, and in 2007 offered David's Pewter Collection.

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had auction sales in the first half of 2019 that totalled £2.2 billion / \$2.8 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and international expertise. Christie's offers around 350 auctions annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewellery, photographs, collectibles, wine, and more. Prices range from \$200 to over \$100 million. Christie's also has a long and successful history conducting private sales for its clients in all categories, with emphasis on Post-War & Contemporary, Impressionist & Modern, Old Masters and Jewellery.

Alongside regular sales online, Christie's has a global presence in 46 countries, with 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, Hong Kong, and Shanghai.

*Please note when quoting estimates above that other fees will apply in addition to the hammer price - see Section D of the Conditions of Sale at the back of the sale catalogue.

*Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium and are reported net of applicable fees.

Images available on request

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