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# Antiques Trade GAZETTE

LONDON

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Issue No. 1308

17 Whitcomb Street, London WC2H 7PL. Telephone Nos. — see Page 3

## It may be Kenilworth, but it's not the Kenilworth Fair

ANTIQUÉ fairs are returning to Chesford Grange, Kenilworth, one of the most popular and enduring venues in the Midlands, when from April 1 to 5 next year Robert Bailey stages The Bailey Kenilworth Antiques Fair.

For many years under different organisers The Kenilworth Antiques Fair at Chesford Grange was among the top vetted provincial fairs.

The last organiser, Kenilworth dealer Janice Paul, abandoned the event last year when she found proposed price increases for use of the venue prohibitive.

Chesford Grange has indeed had a £4 million refurbishment but Mr Bailey came to an agreement with the new owners early this year and was prepared to meet their demands. Bailey insists they did not lower the price for him.

However, the new fair is not a relaunch of last year's venerable fixture. Mr Bailey says: "This is the replacement of a very successful fair we staged some years ago at Ragley Hall in Warwickshire. The Chesford Grange Hotel has definite appeal following a refit."

## New chief for Portobello team

GEOFF KNOWLES is stepping down as chairman of the 750-strong Portobello Antique Dealers' Association (PADA) after seven years.

He is succeeded by silver dealer Costas Kleanthous who has traded in the Portobello Road since 1969 and been a member of the association's board since 1994.

PADA was formed in 1985 to promote the interests of the large numbers of antique dealers in the Portobello Road and Westbourne Grove areas and under Geoff Knowles' leadership it was influential in maintaining the vitality of the market during the recession of the early 1990s. Members pay £44 a year and receive a £1 share in the company. Benefits include use of the association's own car parks.

The profile of the area has been kept high by the distribution of up to 100,000 of the association's annual brochures and the introduction of a distinctive sign-painted shuttle bus to bring in potential customers to the market on Saturday mornings.

"We have developed a strong team here," said

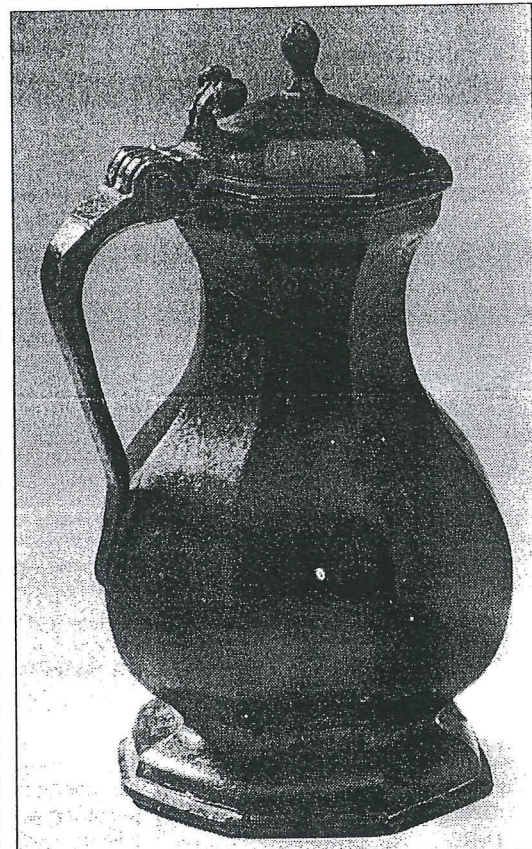
## Cole joins Trojan TV

BRIAN COLE, a former director of Christie's who became the executive director of the International Association of Auctioneers in July, has joined the board of Trojan Television, the company pioneering televised sales via The Auction Channel.

Geoff Knowles, "and the time has come for me to let others take a lead and concentrate on my own business interests."

"Trade has been a bit slacker this summer and new initiatives are needed," he added.

Among plans for next year is a promotional visit by a group of Portobello dealers to a Japanese department store.



The Tonbridge Flagon, a rare example of 14th century pewter which sold for £28,500 (plus premium) when Phillips sold 1800 pieces from the highly regarded collection of the late Dr Sandy Law at their Chester saleroom on September 25.

This well preserved octagonal vessel, which was found by the river Medway at Tonbridge Castle in Kent, was purchased at auction in 1985 for £19,500 (plus premium) by Dr Law, who lent it to the Age of Chivalry Exhibition at the Royal Academy in 1987.

In recognition of the fact that the flagon was worth many times more than anything else in his collection, Dr Law is reported to have made special security arrangements for it, keeping it in a bucket under the sink with the dishcloths.

It has now been bought by a Belgian collector.

A report on other items from the collection will appear in a future issue.

## New base for trade guild

THE GUILD OF Antique Dealers and Restorers has a new administrative address at 111 Belle Vue Road, Shrewsbury SY3 7NJ Tel. 01743 271852.

GADAR was set up in 1989 to provide a low cost organisation for the trade, without strict entry requirements.

It has never attracted the trade in the large numbers originally envisaged but it has proved

## Obitu

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## Auctio update

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## Small c

THE SHO young coin was one of raised at t tional Numi gress last mc ●Richard F reports from on page 80.

# NEWARK

INTERNATIONAL ANTIQUES  
& COLLECTORS FAIR

Newark & Notts Showground, Junc A1/A46 Lincoln

20th & 21st October

Trade: 20th October 7.30am — £20 per person  
Public: 21st October 7am-4pm — £5 per person

# AUCTION REPORTS

by Roland Arkell

## Rare pewter flagon sets £28,500 record as world rivals bid at Chester

THE pewter amassed by former British Pewter Society president Dr Sandy Law was the classic enthusiast's study collection and thus very different from that compiled by earlier president Kenneth Bradshaw and sold at Sotheby's Sussex six months previously. The latter was a select offering of just 68 choice pieces (an earlier tranche had been offered in 1977) which sold at £115,000; the former a more extensive and eclectic offering incorporating both the very earliest pieces right through to the Victorian mass productions in Britannia metal. The Law collection numbered 429 lots and many more pieces which (with a few after sales taken into account) raised just a hair's breadth short of £250,000.

Some items were conspicuous by their absence – there were, for example, none of the candlesticks which had found five-figure sums at Billingshurst earlier in the year – but blue-chip lots were thick on the ground and each distinguished by one or more points of interest be they age, form, provenance or condition.

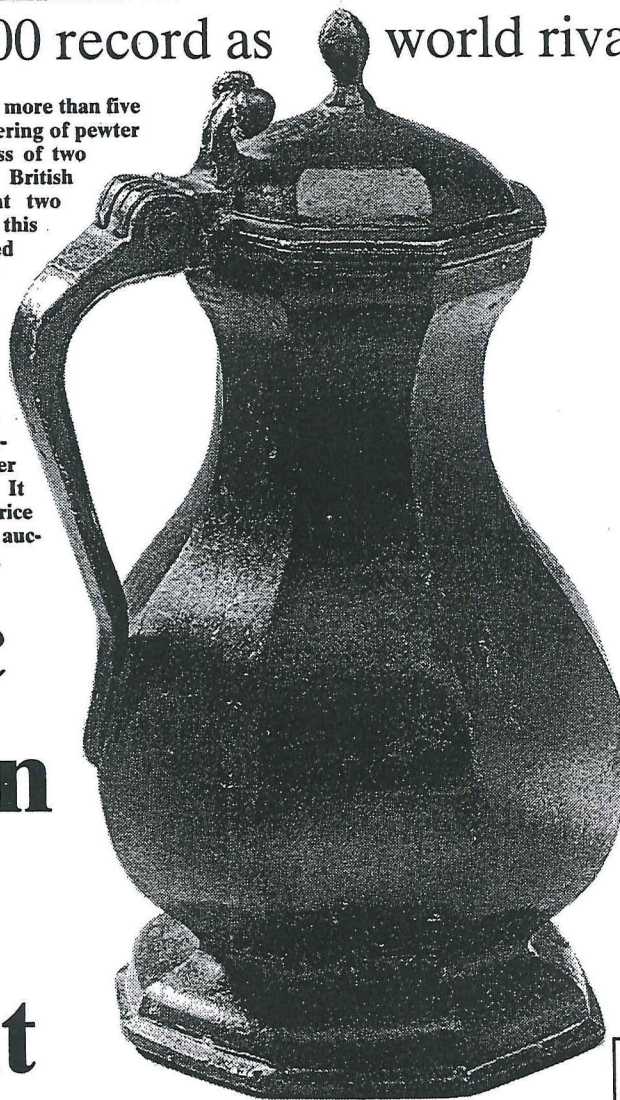
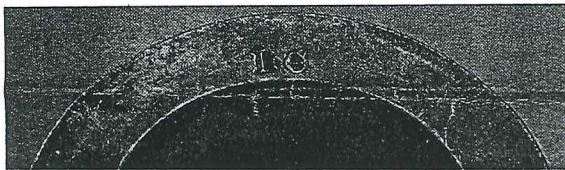
The Tonbridge Flagon was the jewel of the collection: a remarkable survival from 14th century England or Flanders discovered in the Medway Basin near Tonbridge Castle (see full report on page one of the *Gazette* No. 1308, October 10).

Similar examples exist in European institutional collections but this is the only example which has ever been or ever likely to come onto the market. It was last bought by Sandy Law at Sotheby's in London in 1985 for £21,000 (he took to storing it in a bucket under the kitchen sink) and its appearance at auction after 12 years provided a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for a Belgian collector who parted with £28,500.

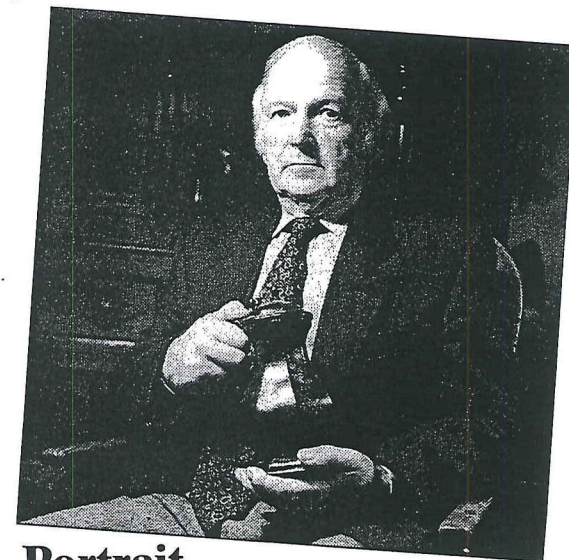
Incidentally a pewter Communion flagon by Johann Christoph Heyne of Lancaster, Pennsylvania was sold by

When 1997 began it had been more than five years since the last major offering of pewter at auction but the recent loss of two leading members of The British Pewter Society has brought two major collections to auction this year. In March we were treated to the collection formed by 1969-80 society president Kenneth Bradshaw offered at Sotheby's Billingshurst (see *Gazette* 1285, April 26); recently Phillips (P15/10) published the catalogue of the Sandy Law Collection offered at their Chester branch on September 25. It could serve as a benchmark price guide for collectors buying at auction from two to five figures...

# A classic collection of a past president lays down pewter law



A larger 13 1/2 in (34cm) diameter dish of the same period (and again marked for the household of Arthur Tudor) was of particular significance for its later marks which include the arms of the Cleves family: the theory is that this dish was part of the divorce settlement between Henry VIII and Anne of

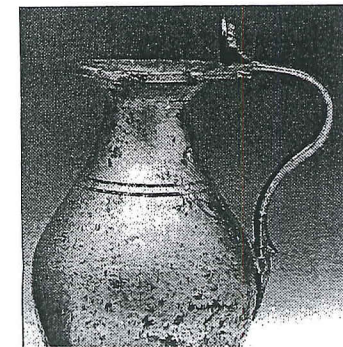


## Portrait of a contented collector

Dr Alexander Steel Law, who died last year, is pictured above holding the Tonbridge Flagon, bought at Sotheby's in 1985 for £21,000, kept under his kitchen sink and sold at Phillips of Chester this September for an auction record of £28,500.

Dr Law began collecting pewter relatively late in the early 1970s but his enthusiasm for the medium grew quickly: buying at the Isher sale of 1976; joining the British Pewter Society in 1977 (he was its president from 1993-95) and creating one of the world's foremost collections throughout the '80s and '90s. His research, to compile a list of pewterers pre-dating the London touchplates (which have existed since the Great Fire of London) awaits publication.

### The high standards of the Law collection



tunity for a Belgian collector who parted with £28,500.

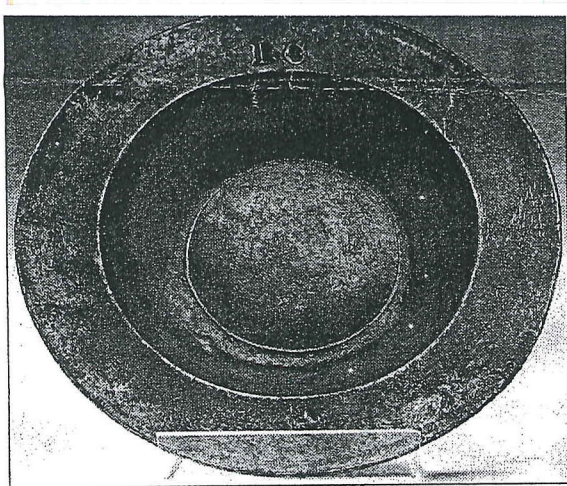
Incidentally a pewter Communion flagon by Johann Christoph Heyne of Lancaster, Pennsylvania was sold by American auctioneers J.C. Cochran of Boonsboro, Maryland just five days previously for \$50,000 (£31,650) and these two prices are believed to represent American and European records for pewter at auction.

Better examples of the 17th century flagon were seen in the Bradshaw collection but the period was well represented: James I – with a tapering cylinder drum on an ovolo moulded foot with a knopped bun cover and a large erect thumbpiece, 14in (35cm) high (estimate £1500-2000); Charles I – with a straighter cylindrical drum, a more pronounced knopped bun cover and a pierced heart and bar thumbpiece, 13in (33cm) high.

There were examples of both in the £1500-2500 price bracket but these were considered exceptional survivals and realised £4200 each.

Lot 50 was less than characteristic: a Commonwealth tankard with a plain tapering drum, a shallow stepped lid and a twin cusp thumbpiece. As the following entries to the catalogue illustrated, this is a form better associated with silver and pewter vessels from the Restoration period, c.1680, and accordingly rare with Commonwealth touch marks. Sandy Law had bid £1350 to secure it at Sotheby's in December of 1981. Here it doubled the lower estimate, bringing £8000

Right: superb condition, an inscription *More Majorum* and the Scottish factor helped this baluster measure c.1800 to £2200 at Phillips' dispersal of the Law pewter at Chester which included, far right, a Commonwealth period tankard at £8000.



Another of the very early survivals from the Law collection was this saucer c.1400 sold for £5200.

from a private collector.

Another of the well-known treasures in the Law archive was an early saucer c.1400 distinguished by a deep booge with the touch mark of a hammer in a circle and the Lombardic initials *RE* to the broad rim, 5 3/4in (14cm) diameter. This example is identical to another excavated at Tong Castle and exceptional for both its early date and its remarkable condition which shows nature's gilding at its best. It sold for £5200.

An early Tudor dish struck to the rim with the crowned ostrich feather emblem of Arthur, Prince of Wales (1486-1502) is one of the famous hoard of about 20 excavated in 1899 on the site of a Tudor royal residence during extensions to Guy's Hospital. Others can be seen in Reading Museum and the Museum of London; one in the Bradshaw collection realised £4200; this comparable example made £3800.

the same period (and again marked for the household of Arthur Tudor) was of particular significance for its later marks which include the arms of the Cleves family: the theory is that this dish was part of the divorce settlement between Henry VIII and Anne of Cleves. Sandy Law discovered it among a mixed lot of plate bought for just £15 but restoration makes it an academic rather than a very valuable piece. It has recently been on loan to Hampton Court Palace whose trustees secured it here below hopes at £1800 in addition to the previous lot: a well preserved 16th century dish struck with a crowned rose mark at £2500.

A private collector secured a pair of small plates from the celebrated Cotehele service amassed by the Earl of Mount Edgcumbe c.1600 struck with the bona fide monogram *TC* for Thomas Cotehele. They more than doubled expectations at £2200.

A Scottish spouted measure c.1800 applied with a flat lid and spade thumbpiece above a baluster body incised with rings and the inscription *More Majorum*, 8in (20cm) high, was one of a number of lots to benefit from its origins North of the Border. It was in exceptional condition and the inscription was a nice touch but the winning bid by a US collector was £2200 – four times the top estimate.

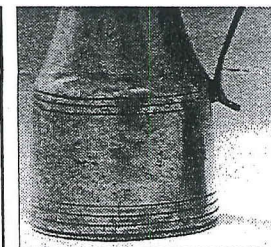
The classic Scottish measure of the late 17th/early 18th century is the potbelly and there were four examples of this satisfying form in the Law collection. Evidently small size is considered a particular virtue: the serious competition arrived with a lidless half mutchkin measure, 4 1/2in (11.5cm) high and another with a lid standing just 3 3/4in (9.5cm) high to accommodate a quarter mutchkin. They sold to collectors from the US at £2100 and £2800 respectively – again four times expectations.

The sale to the US of a one gallon haystack measure c.1800 illustrated right, for a treble-estimate £1600 suggests that Irish material was also placed at a premium.

So much for the rarities. What about the lower end of the market?

Traditionally pewter has an image problem as an academic rather than a fashionable collecting area with two effects: the top end is dominated by a small number of serious collectors (the last sale saw top pieces carved up between about 10 paddles); the absence of younger collectors in the marketplace to purchase the 19th century baluster form measures and the modest late 18th century tankards has left the £10-100 price bracket rather depressed.

Perhaps the demographics did not change much at this sale but specialist David Houlston thought the bidding did. Grouped in sensible numbers of fives, sixes and sevens – the sort that would fill the shelf of a dresser – every lot bar eight sold.

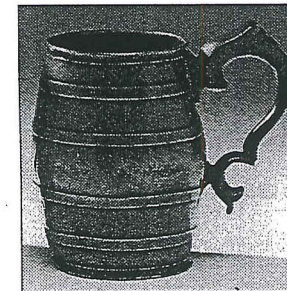
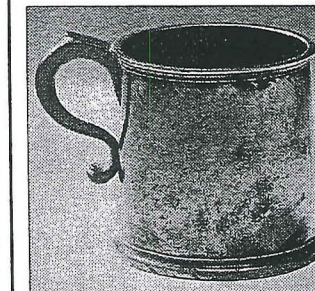


There were plenty of mixed lots in the Law collection sold in the £50-500 price bracket but illustrated here are some of the more typical prices realised for standard items sufficiently valuable to be offered as individual lots.

Above left: a Scottish tappit hen c.1800, 10 1/2in (26.5cm) high – £450.

Above right: a 4th century BC Romano-British flask, 9in (23cm) high – £850.

Right: an Irish one gallon haystack measure, 11 1/2in (29cm) high £1600.



More from the Law collection...

Above left: an 18th century lidless mug, 3 3/4in (9.5cm) high – £180. Above right: a barrel shaped pint mug c.1830-40, 5in (12.5cm) high – £380.

Below left: a pint ball baluster measure c.1660, 6 1/2in (17cm) high – £1400.

Below right: an early Georgian tankard c.1730, 7in (18cm) high – £450.

