

Household plate of the dukes of Ormonde

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Few household inventories survive, and this is particularly true among Irish documents. In recent times considerable work has been done to catalogue the surviving Irish family papers at the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland and the Irish Manuscripts Dept, National Library of Ireland, Dublin. Access to this research material has led to several books on life in Irish households and their contents.¹ In 1895–1912 the Historical Manuscripts Commission published the Ormonde household inventories, part of the manuscripts of the Marquess of Ormonde held at Kilkenny Castle.²

Sadly, only a handful of household plate inventories appear to have survived, although plate books were not only of legal (estate) importance but also an essential means of keeping track of family silver³ as it was moved between one residence and another, depending on where a family was residing. It is understandable that once the silver had been sold there was little incentive to keep the plate books. Silver was treated as household commodity ('a fashionable home bank'), both to elevate a family's status and to have the freedom to convert it into cash when needed. The latter was quickly achieved by sending it to the local goldsmith, where 75–80% of cost price could be realised [fig 5].

The most complete Irish household plate inventories to have survived are contained in the eleven volumes of *Household Inventory* kept by the 1st and 2nd Dukes of Ormonde, of Kilkenny Castle, Dublin Castle, St James's Square, London and Richmond Lodge, London.⁴ The ledgers cover the period between 1674, when the 1st Duke moved from England to Kilkenny, and 1714, when the 2nd Duke went into exile.



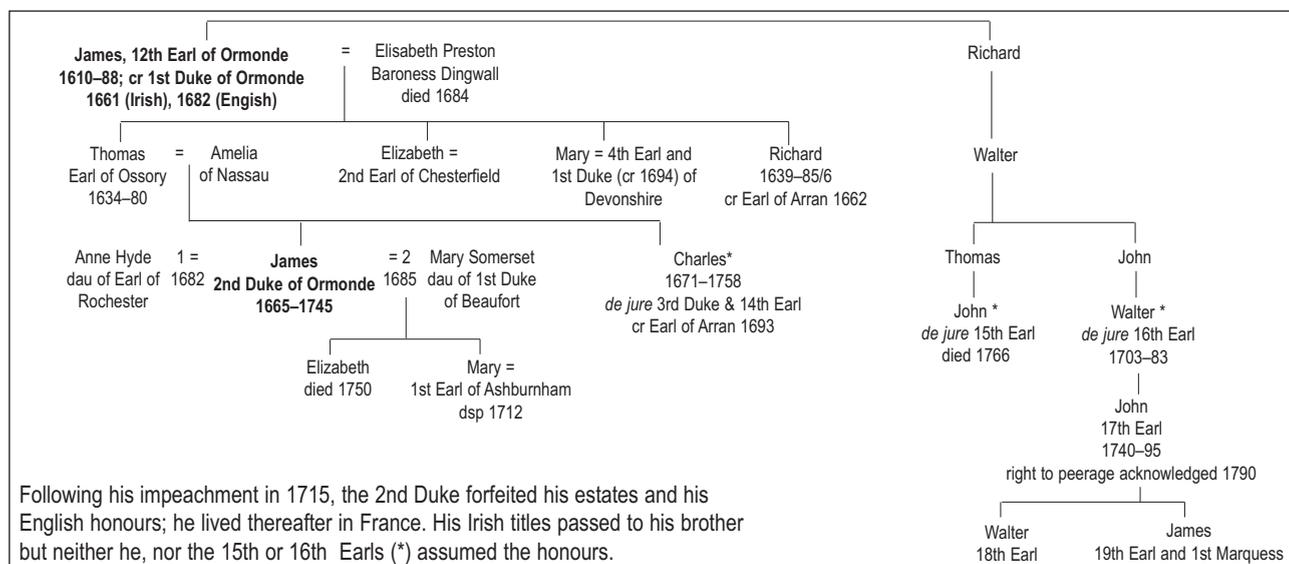
1 Seal of James, 2nd Duke of Ormonde.
(The National Archives, Kew)

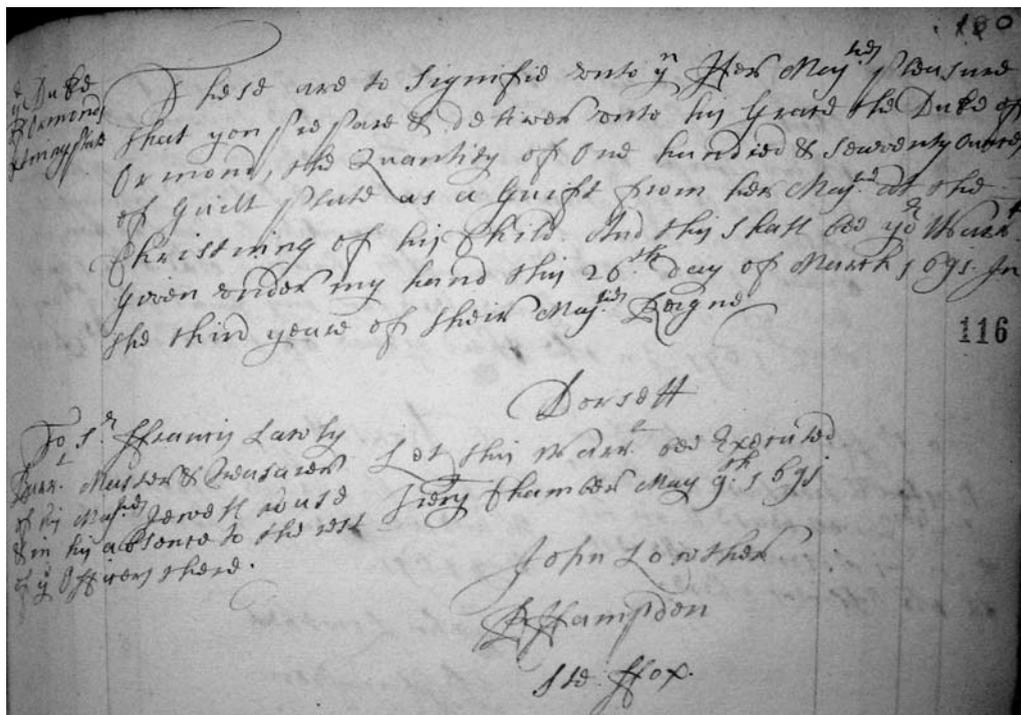
1 Toby Barnard, *Making the Grand Figure*, New Haven 2004; Jane Fenelon, 'The Ormonde Picture Collection', *Duchas*, The Heritage Service, Belfast 2001, (hereafter Fenelon 2004); Demond Fitzgerald & James Pyle, *Irish Furniture*, Dublin 2007.
2 Historical Manuscripts Commission report, *The*

Manuscripts of the Marquis of Ormonde, New series, vol VII, 1912, pp512–13.

3 The plate in many cases represented a significant percentage of the family assets.

4 National Library of Ireland, Ormonde Papers MSS 2521-2525, 2527-2529, 2552-2555.





2 Queen Mary's christening gift to Lady Mary Butler, younger daughter of the 2nd Duke, of gilt plates, recorded in the Jewel House Book 26 March 1691. See Appendix 3. (The National Archives, Kew)

The two dukes

James Butler, 12th Earl of Ormonde, was a staunch royalist, in command of the Irish army in 1641 and Lord Lieutenant in 1644. With his wife and children he accompanied Charles II into exile and was raised to the Irish dukedom of Ormonde on 30 March 1661 following the Restoration. He returned to Ireland as Lord Lieutenant from 1662 to 1669. In 1677 he was appointed for a third term as Lord Lieutenant (1677–85). Having been educated at Oxford, he was Chancellor of the University 1669–88. On his death in 1688 he was succeeded by his grandson, James, in the dukedom and in the post of Chancellor (1688–1715).

The 2nd Duke was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland⁵ 1703–07 and 1711–13. On his return to Ireland in the summer of 1703, the city of Dublin held a splendid entertainment for the duke and duchess at the Tholsel (city hall), with corporations marching through the streets. Thomas Bolton, goldsmith, as master of works for the city, was appointed one of the stewards to oversee this entertainment.⁶ Late in Queen Anne's reign rumours circulated that the duke was a Jacobite sympathiser, leading to his exile on George I's succession. His wife Mary remained in England and wrote a note on 10 September 1715, 'Paid the Taylor for clothes my Lord had made when he went away £16:03:00'. The Forfeited Estates Commission auctioned the properties and their contents, including paintings, tapestries and furniture at St James's Square, Richmond Lodge and Kilkenny Castle. Some of the contents were bought by relatives of Ormonde and by an agent, a Mr Hackett. Hackett

appears to have been Ormonde's clerk in Kilkenny⁷ and also appears to have run a lucrative law practice in Dublin and London. He purchased Ormonde House, St James's Square, for £7,500 and George I purchased Richmond Lodge. Although detailed auction records survive of the household contents sold, no silver is recorded.⁸ An appraisal of the contents of Kilkenny Castle made on 7 October 1717 came to £2,320. The entire proceeds from all properties and contents came to £35,566. It is probable that Ormonde sold the plate to the goldsmith bankers Vyner or Child before his exile.

Until an identifiable item from the inventories appears on the market, one must assume the fate of all the plate was the melting pot. However, several silver items associated with the dukes have survived, including a gift from the 1st Duke to Lady Stephens of a set of diminutive cups on stands, by the mysterious goldsmith FS/S, 1686/87,⁹ and a gift from the 2nd Duke of a monteith to Richard Cox in 1703/04.¹⁰ Neither of these items is identifiable in the inventories.

The inventories

Many fascinating insights are gleaned from these ledgers, which were compiled over a period of about forty years, in particular how silver was used to decorate the interior. In Kilkenny Castle, most of the silver furniture, with sconces, silver-framed looking glasses, silver tables, two stands and a silver frame for a myrtle tree were displayed 'in the alcove', although in what room this was is not specified. The bedrooms were enriched with a silver table, a dressing set, sconces,

warming pans and bedpans. A considerable amount of plate was designated for cooking, serving and dining. These ledgers show the Butler family's pride in their possessions and the care taken of them. For example, the captain of the frigate that transported the duke and duchess's household effects and plate in June 1674 was rewarded, in appreciation of safe passage, with a large gilt tankard and cover with two handles [Appendix 1]. Several house staff were appointed to take charge of the silver. At Kilkenny Castle in 1674, the panter,¹¹ Daniel Lidford, appears to have been the senior person responsible for the plate. In 1689 Thomas Sturges acted as panter and in 1705 was followed by Stephen Beaumont. Not only did the panter repeatedly make an inventory of seemingly all¹² silver and gold, but they oversaw the distribution of each item throughout the house. For example, the silver headed porter's staff was signed over to the porter Mr Dupond. The panter noted the items 'wanting' or missing and those that were sent for repair or traded for new silver. In 1674 the confectioner, Mrs Jones, was responsible for a considerable amount of silver used for cooking, such as preserving spoons and a skillet with an iron frame. The valet de chambre (surgeon/hairdresser), Mr Mezandere, of whom a portrait with the duke survives,¹³ took charge of the trimming pot with ewer and four porringers 'to lett blood in'.¹⁴

Appendix 1: 1674 and 1684

The first surviving inventory of plate appears to be a record of a shipment of plate made by the 1st Duke from London to Ireland on 23 July 1674. Unfortunately the weights of the objects do not accompany their descriptions. On his appointment for his third term as Lord Lieutenant in 1677, the duke moved a large part of the plate from Kilkenny Castle to furnish Dublin Castle. A detailed account was made in 1684 in Dublin Castle and this time weights are diligently recorded. This 1684 inventory lists the objects recorded in 1674 in much the same order and items left behind at Kilkenny are detailed as such. Thus *Appendix 1* is compiled from both inventories. It is quite possible that some items may be listed twice, but every effort has been made to ensure that weights are not duplicated. For some items no weights are recorded and even without those weights the combined weight of the plate in 1684 is close to 22,000oz.

Appendix 2: 1689

The timing of the next major inventory taken in St James's on 24 January 1689 suggests it was for estate purposes, the 1st Duke having died the previous year. Many of the items listed before appear again, yet the German flagons and the swan pots are gone. Some items appear for the first time, for example three chased tankards, a gilt sideboard dish and a gilt set of communion plate. This inventory also lists items of 'Ould Plate Changed' and 'The new Plate in Exchange of ye ould ye 18 March 1692/3'.

As we have seen, the plate travelled between residences depending on where the Ormondes resided. However on occasion some plate was left behind in residences vacated. For example, a letter from Lady Elizabeth from London in 1682 to her brother Captain George Mathews instructs him to oversee a shipment from Kilkenny via Dublin to London. She asks her brother to ship three of the Dieppe suite of hangings and two boxes of sconces she had

5 Appointed by letter of the Great Seal of England of 19 February 1702/3. A Warrant on 12 February 1702/3 authorised the Receiver-General of Ireland to pay him £3,000, for the cost of his equipage as Lord Lieutenant and of his voyage to Ireland. *Calendar of Treasury Books 1703, vol XVIII p138*.

6 J.T. Gilbert, *Calendar of the Ancient Records of the City of Dublin, 1894, vol VI, p290* (hereafter CARD). It is possible that a set of ambassadorial plate with the royal arms of Queen Anne, Thomas Bolton, Dublin 1703/04 was part of this splendid entertainment. A sideboard dish (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston) and ewer (private collection), a pair of covered wine jugs (one in San Antonio Museum of Art, Texas, one in a private collection) and a two-handled cup (private collection) survive. None of these items are identifiable in the inventories.

7 A Robert Hackett served as clerk to Kilkenny Corporation 1718 and is mentioned in the mayor's resolution to award Richard Tighe his 'Freedom of the City in a Gold Box of the value of twenty Guineas... and that Robert Hackett do take care to get the same done', *Kilkenny Corporation Minutes*.

8 TNA Forfeited Estates Commission. (FEC) 1/880. An extensive record of the

estate sale including a printed catalogue of the Ormonde House sale with prices realised.

9 Inscribed 'A Bartlemew Fairing sent by His Grace the Duke of Ormonde to Fridasweed Lady Stephens, 1686', Sotheby's London, 12 June 1986 lot 126. A 'Bartlemew Fairing' is a seventeenth-century term derived from Bartholomew Fair, held annually for the sale of trinkets, toys and other pleasures. It may be a play on words for sexual favours, more bluntly put in 1641 as a 'fucking exchange'.

10 Art Institute of Chicago, Bequest Mary Hooker Dole; Thomas Bolton, Dublin, 1703/04, Sotheby's London, 8 December 1933 lot 131, property of Villiers-Stuart.

11 A panter as defined by the *Oxford Dictionary* was an officer of the household in charge of the pantry - 1580. Over time the term panter changed to butler. Indeed the Butler family may well have contributed to this usage.

12 Small objects like silver buckles, buttons, spurs, sword hilts and, surprisingly, gold and silver freedom boxes were not recorded in the inventory.

13 Fenelon (as note 1), p15.

14 For a lively discussion on porringers vs bleeding bowls see Cdr G.E.P. How, [note 14 continued overleaf]



3 Circle of Sir Godfrey Kneller, James, 2nd Duke of Ormonde (1665–1745). (Christie's)

left behind at Kilkenny. The boxes contained four pairs of large chased sconces with top pieces and double sockets and four lesser ones with double sockets without tops. All were to be put in a strong deal case. She added that it would incur unnecessary expense to buy new hangings and that the plate was to be changed for what would be more useful.¹⁵ Confirmation of that shipment is found in the inventories dated 26 February 1682/3, listing the eight sconces as described by her and the three Dieppe suites (of Desius, of Achilles, and the suit of horses?). A partial suit of Desius hangs today in the castle.

An entry in October of 1685 (at the bottom of *Appendix 2*) lists the plate that was deposited in the Earl of Devonshire's house for the use of the Earl of Ossory. The duke had just completed his last term as Lord Lieutenant and tensions were rising as James II succeeded Charles II.

Appendix 3: circa 1702–03

Although no specific date is recorded for this inventory, it must have been taken around 1702–03 when the 2nd Duke was appointed Lord Lieutenant and planned to move from St James's to Ireland. This inventory probably only covers plate at St James's and not what was at Richmond and Kilkenny Castle. The total weight comes to about 7,500oz only. Again there is considerable change in the type of plate listed. The large gilt sideboard dish and the two round chased basins for 'ye sideboard' are still recorded. The cistern and fountain are not listed, nor are the large looking glasses. New plate includes two ice pails, a tureen and cover, two Irish salvers, three gilt casters boxes, two cups and covers for soup. In the 'Groome of the Chambers' charge we find twelve round candlesticks. There appears to be more gilt plate such as the two sets of a dozen spoons, forks and knives.

Appendix 4: 1705

The inventory made by the 2nd Duke in 1705, resident in Dublin Castle as Lord Lieutenant, with Stephen Beaumont as panter, again shows considerable change in the plate listed, including some items specific to Dublin Castle. This is the only plate inventory where the title page includes all the main residences of the Butler family [*fig 4*]. Because of this, I assume that this inventory lists all plate in the 2nd Duke's possession, even though the plate is not categorised according to residence. Monumental items such as the cistern and fountain and large looking glasses and the silver table and stands are no longer recorded. The total weight of plate was now around 10,000oz, half of what it was in 1684.

This inventory records the Royal Chapel plate for the Royal Chapel at Dublin Castle, brought over by the Earl of Rochester, the previous Lord Lieutenant. The Jewel House entry records their weight, taken by a Dublin goldsmith, John Clifton [*fig 7*]. Fortunately this set still

exists, and is displayed in Dublin's Christ Church treasury vault.

One of the last Ormonde plate inventories made was for Richmond, on 13 February 1713/4. Unfortunately no weights are recorded and so no Appendix has been compiled. Several new items have made their appearance: a cheese and a bread toaster, six jack spits, two flask stands, a bottle handle, two 'sauce' cups and 'tea tongues'.

Specific items of household plate

The very first item recorded in the 1674 inventory is a gold cup and cover, with a note stating that the cup was left behind in London to cover debts. This gold cup was probably a welcoming gift to the duke as Lord Lieutenant from Dublin City Corporation. It is listed in the city records along with a gold freedom box (not found in the inventories) in 1662, at a cost of 350 guineas.¹⁶

Silver furniture features strongly in the earlier inventories. For example a 'rich garniture for one great looking glass five foot tall made by Mr. Welsh', a silver table and further silver garniture for a large table and two stands are recorded.¹⁷ There were at least two sets of figured andirons with garniture for shovels, tongues and hooks for the chimney. The Dublin Castle inventory [*Appendix 1*] lists several more andirons, including a set of globe andirons.¹⁸ Several sets of sconces are listed; four large chased sconces with double sockets and four lesser chased sconces with double sockets. Two perfuming pots or pans, a greater and lesser one are listed for Kilkenny. A cistern 'with a bottom for flowers' weighing 1,858oz is recorded. One is intrigued to know whether the cistern stood on a base or had a liner to hold flowers? In Kilkenny a large fountain with a 'cock and cover' accompanied this cistern. The weight of 306oz seems rather light compared to the Meath fountain of 1,088 oz.¹⁹ The drawing room had a mirror, a pair of sconces with double sockets and a pair of andirons with tools and hooks. A smaller silver table was placed in 'my Lords closet'. The looking glass with ciphers, the large silver table and two stands, the black marble andirons with fire tools and hooks, four sconces with double sockets and the fountain with cover were placed in the alcove – it must have left a great impression on anyone who had the opportunity to visit. In St James's in 1689 all of the alcove items and four more sconces with double sockets were placed in the great bedchamber. The drawing room in St. James's had eight sconces and a pair of andirons with tools.

In a few instances the inventories record a country of origin. 'A pair of German Flagons partially gilded' is recorded as kept in cases.²⁰ There is an entry for five French pottingers and covers in charge of Mr Mezandere. In *Appendix 3*, 'two large salvers made in Ireland' are recorded. There are several interesting

descriptive terms used. For example a 14oz pot of 'college fashion', possibly an oxeye cup, and a pair of large swan pots weighing 638oz. A large pair of water bottles with chains, weighing 185oz, more commonly known as pilgrim bottles, are about half the size of those at Welbeck.²¹

Dining plate represents the bulk of the weight of the silver inventory. In 1674 there are 6 dozen trencher plates accompanied by 6 dozen spoons, 3 dozen knives and forks, 24 large dishes and 12 smaller dishes, 18 'intermesse bottoms' of the larger size and 10 intermesse of small size.²² Six of the larger bottoms had garters engraved. These 'bottoms' are probably plain plates to serve a new course.²³ By 1684, in Dublin Castle, this quantity had increased to 128 trencher plates (approx 20oz each), 36 large dishes (approx 101oz each), 18 of second-size dishes (approx 73oz each), 8 of the third-size (approx 55oz each), 22 large bottoms (approx 37oz each), 10 of second-size bottoms (approx 29oz each), eight of third-size bottoms (approx. 22 oz each) and 24 chased salvers (approx 51oz each). The 24 chased salvers were in Mrs Jones' charge in Kilkenny. One could assume that increased demand for entertaining in Dublin Castle necessitated the enlargement of the dining set. The dining set in St James's before the 2nd Duke returned to Dublin Castle in 1703 was considerably smaller. The first-size dishes in 1703 appear to be similar in weight to the third-size dishes of 1684. Even the table plates (16oz each) were lighter than the trencher plates of 1684. In Dublin Castle in 1705, the large first-size dishes, comparing in weight to the first-size dishes of 1684, have reappeared. However there are only six of first- and second-size, 12 of third- and fourth-size and eight of a fifth-size, weighing a total of 4,053oz. The bottoms seem to no longer exist.

Three dozen forks are recorded in 1674 on the first inventory [Appendix I]. This is surprising, as forks had not yet become fashionable in England. Most English plate inventories of this time had no forks listed.²⁴ Two silver 'chaffing' dishes and three silver skillets (one with an iron frame) are recorded. Since both the chafing dishes and skillets are of silver they would have been used on the dining table. Seven ring stands (two with whole bottoms) of approximately 20oz each are listed. All of these items appear to have been useful not only for enhancing the display of dining, but also for keeping the dishes hot and saving the tabletop from injury. The two 'showers' would have been of practical use in centering the hot dishes on the tables.

In the 1674 inventory [Appendix 1] a 'chased frame with five great plates, one of which is fastened to the frame and four smaller plates with chased rims to serve fruit' is an interesting object.²⁵ This is possibly a centrepiece or surtout, an early form of epergne.²⁶ Another table item is a 'frame with four silver pots for oyle, vinegar, pepper and mustard and a little spoon' weighing 88oz. This appears to be an early example of a cruet frame with a mustard pot containing mustard paste served with a little spoon. Mrs Jones, the confectioner in the 1670s, had in her charge, in addition to the surtout, one large deep 'bason without brim', whereas the large deep 'bason with a brim' remained in Daniel Lidford's charge. One wonders if this brim was scalloped and that the descriptive term of montieith had not yet taken hold. The confectioner had several large 'preserving' spoons, one with holes, for her use. The antiseptic nature of silver may explain their use as preserving spoons and different from

Connoisseur, December 1941, pp157-62. The Dublin Goldsmiths Company recorded a porringer as 'bleeding porringer', Thomas Sinsted, 'Dublin Goldsmiths Assay Records part I', *The Silver Society Journal*, no11 1999, p148.

15 HMC, *Manuscripts of the Marquis of Ormonde*, New series, vol III, 1904, p448. dated 10 February 1671/2, but more likely 10 February 1682/3.

16 CARD (as note 6), vol IV, p243.

17 This set is probably quite similar to one in the Royal Collection.

18 These could compare to those at Rosenborg Castle in Copenhagen, see Mogens Bencard, *Silver Furniture*, Rosenborg 1992, pp52-53.

19 Conor O'Brien, 'In seach of the Duke of Ormonde's wine cistern and fountain', *The Silver Society Journal*, no15 2003, pp63-67.

20 One is reminded of the four Hamburg flagons from the Hanoverian collection at Herrenhausen, now at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; see Tracey

Albainy, 'German silver in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston', *Silver Studies, The Journal of the Silver Society*, no19 2005, pp105-09.

21 Alfred Jones, *Catalogue of Plate belonging to the Duke of Portland at Welbeck Abbey*, London 1935, p7.

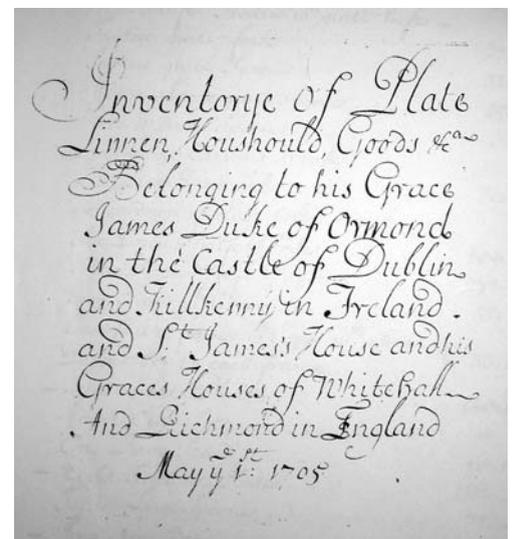
22 For a more detailed discussion on dining plate of French fashion, see Michèle Bimbenet-Privat and David Mitchell, 'Words or images: descriptions of plate in England and France 1660-1700', *The Silver Society Journal*, no15 2003, pp47-62 (hereafter Mitchell 2003).

23 A explanation of these bottoms is welcomed. For terminology used in Jewel Office books see Arthur Grimwade, 'New light on the English Royal plate', *The Silver Society Journal*, no7 1995, p376-77.

24 Mitchell 2003 (as note 22), pp53-54.

25 No weight is recorded and this piece is no longer listed in 1689.

26 Paul Micio, 'Early French surtouts', *Silver Studies, The Journal of the Silver Society*, no19 2005, pp79-97.



4 Title page of the 1705 inventory for the 2nd Duke of Ormonde; see Appendix 4. (National Library of Ireland)

the commonplace description as basting, stuffing or ragout spoons. Mrs Jones' successor had a set of gilt plate, comprising two large octagonal salvers, seven small hexagonal plates and six scalloped basins, to serve the dessert [Appendix 3]. These scalloped dishes were not called 'strawberry dishes'. In 1705 the confectioners had eight gilt basins for 'ye compot' [Appendix 4].

A curious but fascinating entry records the weight and cost of two tankards, 24 spoons and 12 salts bought for Mr Wright, innkeeper at Kilkenny, but overseen by Mr Baxter.[Appendix 1] Clearly the tankards (65oz 5dwt at £18 2s), spoons (43oz 15dwt at £12 11s) and salts (24oz and making at £7 17s) were for the use of the Butler family when at the inn. A small ferrule soldered to the outside of a tankard handle, frequently seen on tankards of that period, may explain a practical need at the inn rather than just decoration.

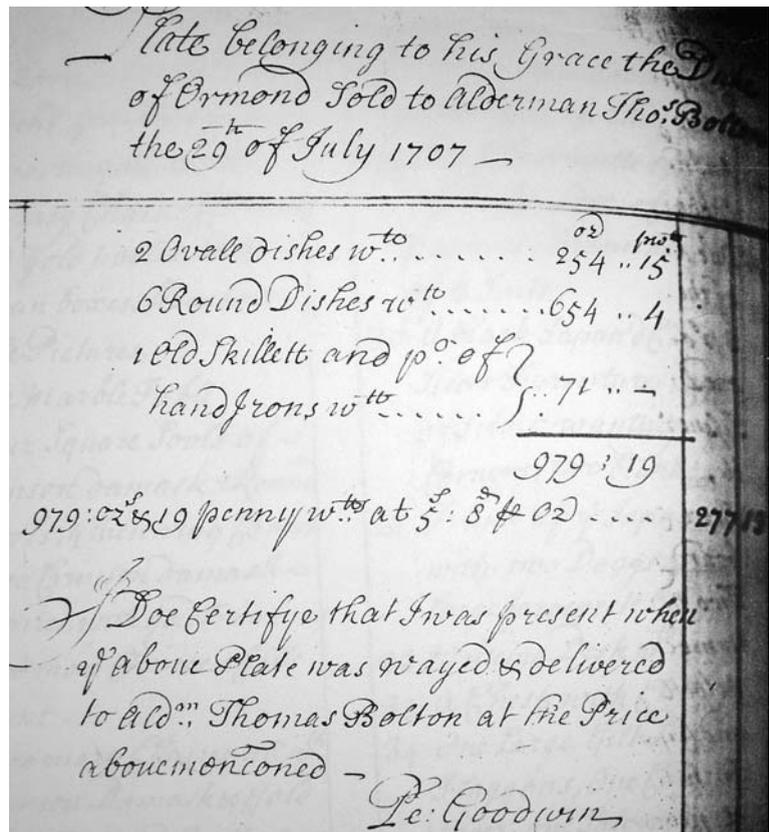
The inventories give us some insight of what happens to household plate during generational hand-me-downs and keeping up with the latest fashions. On succeeding to the dukedom the 2nd Duke sent old plate to be refashioned. Amongst the items traded are two 'mazarines'²⁷ and a basin and ewer, 59 plates, 24 candlesticks, the 2 stands, a shover and a skimmer, and an 'ould' salver. Altogether 2,500oz of old plate were traded in for about 2,100oz of new plate recorded on 18 March 1692/3. The new plate included a new basin and ewer, 7 pairs of knurled and 6 pairs of pillared candlesticks, and

72 plates. Before the 2nd Duke returned to London in 1707 he sold the two large oval dishes and the six first-size dishes and a skillet to Thomas Bolton to raise some cash [fig 5].

Several small domestic objects are worth drawing attention to. These include a silver syringe first listed in 1677 and again in 1684,²⁸ a gilt tongue scraper that is repeatedly recorded from 1674 to 1705, a sponge box (11oz) and a wash-ball box (4oz 8dwt), first recorded in 1702–03. Of the handful or so Irish eighteenth-century household plate inventories I have studied, only one does not list a wash-ball and sponge box. Of this seemingly common household item few English examples have survived.²⁹ Note that by 1705 the sponge ball box has lost 5dwt and the wash-ball box has lost just 1dwt. Weight loss of identifiable silver objects over a period of time, found in these inventories, commonly occurs. However some objects appear to lose a greater percentage of their weight than others. This may relate to more frequent and aggressive cleaning as well as inaccurate weighing.

Few artisan names are revealed in the household inventories and accounts. In January of 1697 Thomas Highmore and Sir Godfrey Kneller were paid £7 and £80 for portraits, and in February 1697 Tompion (watchmaker) was paid £60 for a clock. At Dublin Castle in 1705 details of pewter bought of Mr Handcock in London and of Mr Johnson in Ireland are recorded. With silver, unfortunately, no names of retailer or goldsmith's work-

5 Receipt of old plate sold to Thomas Bolton.
(National Library of Ireland MS 2524)



27 Mazarines were popular around this time, although we do not know exactly what they looked like at that period, see Timothy Kent, 'The Earl of Romney's Silver', *Silver Studies, The Journal of the Silver Society*, vol 16 2004, pp81–86.

28 Syringes for medical use (removal of ear wax) go back to Greek and Roman times. Arthur Grimwade (as note 23) records that in the reign of Charles II, the

Royal Apothecary was responsible for 1 mouth syringe and 2 glyster (enema) syringes.

29 I am aware of only two Irish surviving sponge boxes and one wash-ball box.

30 By the Lord Chamberlain's warrant on 26 March 1691 the Jewel House was instructed to grant 170oz as a christening gift to Lady Mary. PRO, LC9, Jewel Office Books 1660-, p180.

shop are noted and only occasionally are the costs of plate recorded. For example, the cost of Mr Wright's plate at the inn and the cost of a gilt teapot of 24oz 4dwt as £10 4s 8d and one little porringer of 4oz 19dwt as £1 10s [Appendix 3]. It is assumed that most of the silver was made by London goldsmiths but some was surely made by local provincial goldsmiths and Dublin goldsmiths. In Appendix 3 'two large salvers made in Ireland' and '12 Irish spoons' and '12 Irish forks' are recorded in the 1702–03 inventory. The Irish salvers were sent to the goldsmith to make a dessert set. The set of six gilt hexagonal plates (165oz 14dwt) under the confectioner's charge [Appendix 3] were noted as having been given by the queen to Lady Mary (the younger daughter of the 2nd Duke) as a christening gift [fig 2].³⁰ In August 1700 these were returned to the goldsmith to make a new dessert set.

Conclusion

It has been a considerable challenge to extract all the details of plate from the many inventories made, some of which are just quick working lists of shipments, and merge them to provide a comprehensive overview. On several occasions it is unclear whether an inventory includes silver that was left behind in a residence not being occupied by the duke and duchess. Furthermore it is difficult to follow objects from one inventory to the next because of cursory descriptions and, in many cases, no recorded weight for individual items. Even with these limitations, the inventories reveal a tremendous insight into the important role that plate played in a grand household. One is reminded of their contemporary Samuel Pepys, who expressed great pride in being able to entertain his guest on silver plates.

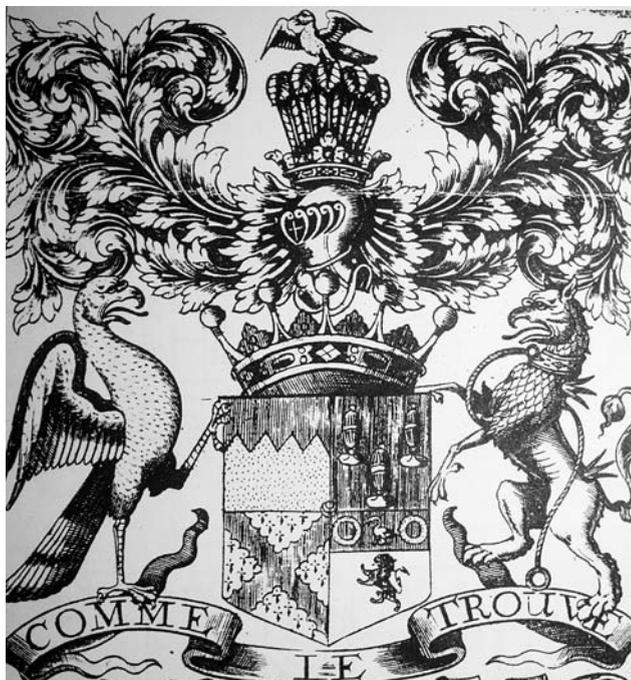
The 1st Duke's close contact to Charles II, the 'Prisage of Wines' held by the Butler family and their large land holdings in Ireland, brought them considerable funds, and they were able to create a substantial inventory between 1660 and 1685. Over 500 pictures, multiple sets of tapestry hangings, and a plate collection of more than 22,000oz, made this household the grandest in Ireland. The 2nd Duke clearly did not continue this pace of

acquisition, yet he commissioned more portraits and readily traded old plate for new and cash. It is somewhat surprising to find that by 1705 the plate holdings had been reduced by 12,000oz or more. This was just after the 2nd Duke's successful campaign at Vigo in October 1702, when 1½ tons of silver bullion were captured from the Spanish.

As a Jacobite sympathiser he would not have been held in the same favour at court as his grandfather. To lose all his offices, his possessions and leave his wife behind in London for the cause of James Francis Edward Stuart, the Old Pretender, must suggest that he was confident of a different future.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to the late Conor O'Brien for encouragement to complete this paper and John Kirwan, archivist, for his help with the Ormonde Papers at the National Library of Ireland.



6 Bookplate of Charles, Earl of Arran, brother of 2nd Duke of Ormonde. (National Library of Ireland MS 2523)