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Volume 2 | Issue 6

An Artisan
Jewel in
Chappaqua



LONDON'S SILVER MINE

Will Noble delves beneath the city's pavements in search of treasure

London is potted with subterranean surprises, from cave-like wine bars to war bunkers to buried rivers. Yet of all the city's underground revelations, the London Silver Vaults is indisputably its most decadent. Here, beneath Chancery Lane, dozens of dealers stock and sell the largest selection of silverware in the world.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the vaults. As Steven Linden, Chairman of the London Silver Vaults Association explains, the warren of passages and storerooms began life in 1876 as a safe deposit, where the city's wealthiest could stronghold jewellery, household silver and sensitive paperwork. Following a bomb strike during the Second World War, it was

reopened in 1953, with silver dealers taking up residence here.

"The dealers used to bring their customers down and gradually it evolved into a shopping center, with the shops becoming smarter," Steven explains. "We have had many celebrities visit us over the years. Regulars were Jack Lemmon, Larry Hagman, Liberace, Jackie Onassis and Rock Hudson to name but a few." Today, global royalty, politicians and films stars are among the 30,000 to 40,000 visitors who visit here each year.

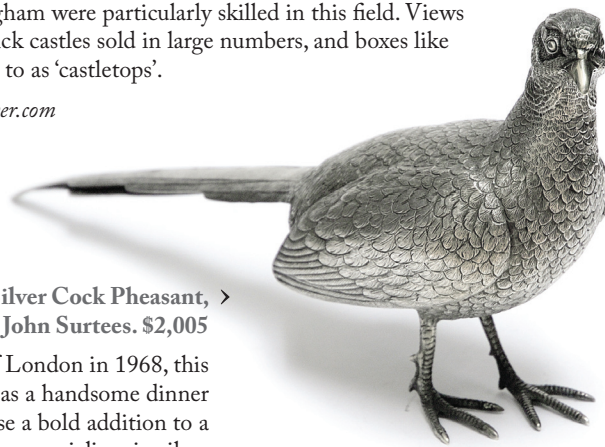
We have selected seven of the finest silver products currently available beneath the bustling British capital.



◀ "Castletop" Victorian Aide Memoir, from Peter Cameron. \$1,724

This is engraved with a view of the Law Courts, Dublin, but was crafted in Birmingham in 1849 by Nathaniel Mills. Souvenir views of popular scenes were made in large numbers in silver from the late 1820s; and the silversmiths of Birmingham were particularly skilled in this field. Views of Windsor and Warwick castles sold in large numbers, and boxes like these are often referred to as 'castletops'.

Petercameronantiquesilver.com



Sterling Silver Cock Pheasant, ▶
from John Surtees. \$2,005

Created by Comyns of London in 1968, this striking silver bird serves as a handsome dinner table piece, or otherwise a bold addition to a sideboard. John Surtees specializes in silver animals; other pieces they stock include a Sterling Silver Oryx (\$2,807) and Solid Silver Ducks (\$4,410 for a pair).

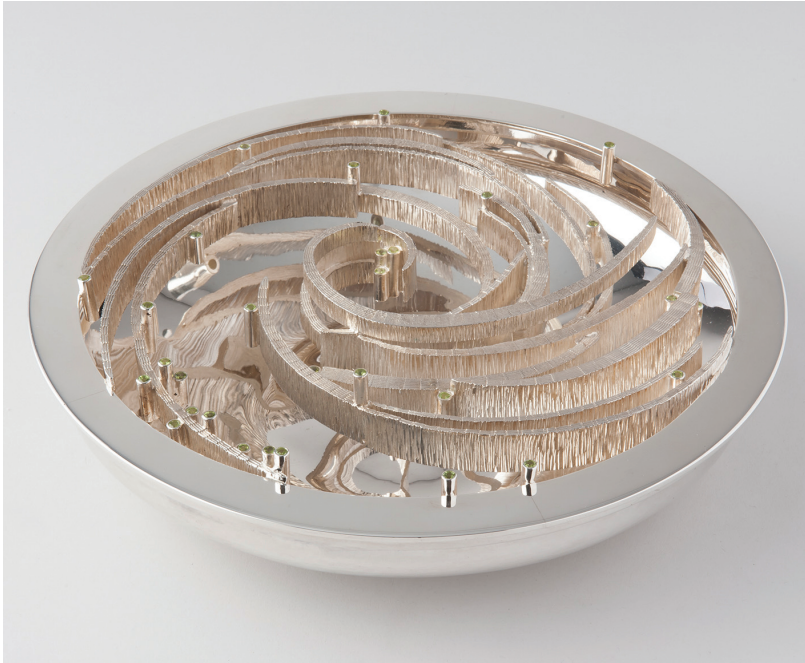
Sales@johnsurtees.co.uk

Chinese Export Silver Bowl with Inscription, ▶
from S&J Stodel. Price on inquiry

Catherine Altie Myers, whose first name is spelled incorrectly in the inscription, died in 1903 and left this silver bowl to Catalina Juliana Mason, her late brother's widow. The brother was Colonel Theodorus Bailey Myers (1821-1887), who served in the American Civil War, and was a collector and philanthropist who left most of his hoard to The New York Public Library and United States National Museum.

Chinesesilver.com





◀ **Bowl by Gerald Benney,
from Langfords. \$23,275**

One of Benney's earlier pieces, this bowl shows silver as art form, rather than function. This extraordinarily heavy piece (86 troy ounces) is hand-raised from sheet silver, while the removable 'lid' is hand-carved from blocks of silver, then hand-chased to give a textured finish and then inset with 33 peridots.

Langfords.com

✓ **Set of Four George IV Sauce Labels,
from Peter Cameron. \$1,125**

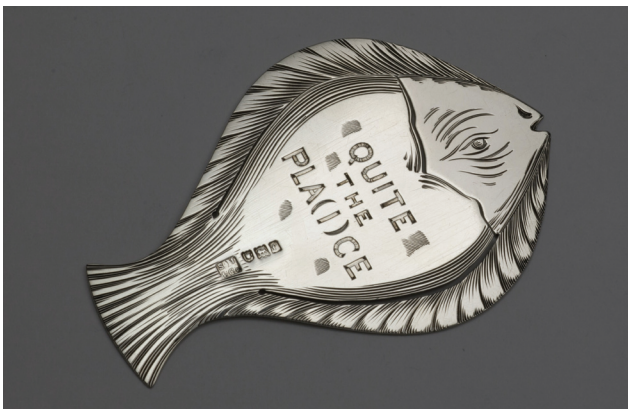
These sauce labels, engraved for 'Anchovy', 'Cayenne', 'Ketchup' and 'Soy', were made in London in 1827 by the Charles and Mary Reily, who were specialist makers of silver wine and sauce labels. Sets of sauce bottles with labels, such as these, began to appear in London from the late 1760s.

Petercameronantiquesilver.com

✓ **Victorian Bookmark,
from Peter Cameron. \$900**

This rare, figural and humorous bookmark was made in London in 1901 by Sampson Mordan & Co – who also claim to have invented the propelling pencil in the early 19th century.

Petercameronantiquesilver.com



◀ **Sterling Silver Tea and Coffee Set by Asprey,
from Langfords. \$12,035**

This incredibly sleek set, consisting of coffee pots, a sugar bowl and a milk jug, was hallmarked in 1966. It flaunts the popular curves of the era and is a stunning centerpiece for any breakfast table.

Langfords.com

