

James Shruder.

The life of James Shruder has been the subject of a great deal of scholarly speculation but, apart from the evidence of silverwork bearing his mark, little concrete information has been found relating to either his background or his business. The silverwork is almost invariably of high quality: sometimes plain, as supplied for the 4th Earl of Warrington; sometimes exuberantly rococo, as exemplified by the coffee pot and tea kettle supplied to Leake Okeover [1701-65] and his wife¹.

The discovery by Robert Barker of an apprenticeship binding, registered on 6th June 1733, whereby James Schruder, 'Chasser etc.' of St. Anne's Soho, took on the curiously named 'Julian Crispin'² as apprentice for the substantial sum of £42³, revealed that Shruder had been working in the parish of St. Anne's Soho for some years prior to registering a mark in 1737. In 1751 Shruder was one of the three witnesses to Paul de Lamerie's will⁴ and the two certainly had a trading relationship⁵. It has been suggested that Shruder, as a chaser and modeller, collaborated in the creation of the finest pieces produced by Lamerie's workshop, including the extraordinary Maynard sideboard dish of 1736 [now in the Cahn collection]⁶.

A few days before registering the apprenticeship, Shruder took out a Marriage Licence from the Vicar General:

'Thirtieth May one Thousand Seven hundred Thirty Three'.

'Which day appeared personally James Shruder of the parish of St. Ann's Soho aged twenty nine yeares and a Batchelor and alledged that he intendeth to Marry with Anne Hubbart of the same parish aged Twenty Eight yeares and a Spinster he Not knowing or believeing any Impediment by reason whatsoever to hinder the said intended Marriage of the truth of which he made Oath and prayed Licence for them to be Married in the parish Church of All Hallows Barkin or Trinity Minories London'.⁷

The marriage duly took place on the 2nd of June at All Hallows Barking by the Tower. Nothing is known of the 'Hubbart', or perhaps 'Hubbard' family. Possibly Ann was the 'Ann Hubbard', the daughter of Thomas and Lydia Hubbard, baptised at St. James' Piccadilly on 7th October 1704.

Over the next seven years six children were born to the Shruders, all Christened at St. Anne Soho: Thomas, on the 28th of June 1734; 'Milecent', on the 29th of December 1735; Paul, on the 10th of January 1737; Anna, on the 30th of January 1738; John, on the 25th of May 1739 and buried on the 14th of September the same year; James, on the 15th of April 1740.

James Shruder registered his first mark with the Goldsmiths' Company – as a 'largeworker' - on the 1st of August 1737 giving his address as Wardour Street. By June 1739, when he entered a second and third mark, he had moved to nearby Greek street from which he advertised himself on his trade card as 'Goldsmith at ye Golden Ewer in Greek-street Soho Makes & Sells all works of Plate Wrought & Plain, of ye Newest Fashion at the most Reasonable Rates.' The card bears the names 'J. Shruder Invt.' and 'J. Warburton Sculp.': a demonstration of Shruder's ability as a designer⁸. John Warburton was an engraver working from the 'Kings Arms Grocers, in More Street, St. Anns, Soho.'⁹ By the summer of 1743 Shruder had moved to the corner of Hedge Lane, Spur-street, Leicester Fields.

Occasional references to Shruder's business appeared in newspapers. In November 1738, George Foulks [or Fouks], alias 'Fox', a Journeyman working for Shruder was indicted for 'feloniously stealing out of Mr. Shruder's Shop about a hundred Ounces of unwrought Silver'. He took it by Parcels of 8 or 10 Ounces at a time, as Opportunity offer'd; but in one Week the said Mr. Shruder lost 36 Ounces.' Foulks was found guilty and sentenced to transportation.¹⁰

There were also advertisements for the recovery of lost property. On Saturday 17th September 1743, the 'Daily Advertiser' carried the following:

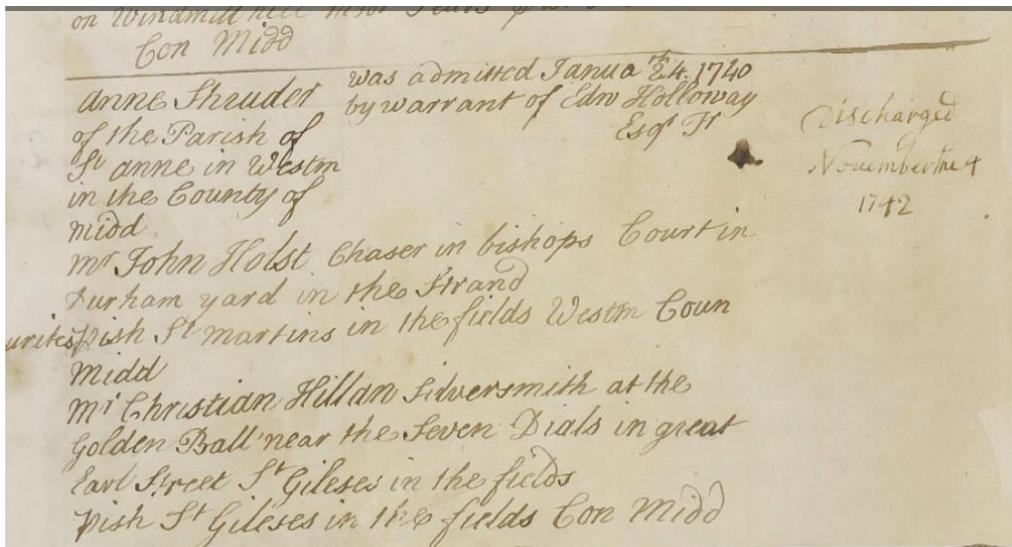
Lost on Saturday Night last, coming from Ranelagh-House, a Silver Watch, the Maker's Name James Vaulove, with a red Leather String, and a white Stone Seal, with a Head engrav'd on it. Whoever brings it to Mr. James Struders, Goldsmith, at the Golden Ewer in Spur-Street, Leicester-Square, or to Mr. St. John, in St. Martin's Street, next a Baker's, shall have three Guineas and a Half Reward, and no Questions ask'd; if pawned or sold, pray give Notice as above, and your Money shall be repaid, with Thanks. No greater Reward will be offer'd.'¹¹

On the 17th of April 1744, the 'Daily Advertiser' carried another advertisement, this time for a pistol. Interestingly Shruder is known to have made silver mounts for a fowling piece by Cahtman [Royal Collection Windsor Castle 1904].

'April 16, 1744. Lost, between Hounslow and London, a small screw Pistol, mounted in Silver, the Maker's Name Picksatt, London. Whoever brings it to Mr. James Shruder, Goldsmith, at the Golden Ewer, the Corner of Hedge-Lane, Leicester-Square, shall receive a Guinea Reward, and no Questions ask'd. Note. No greater Reward will be offer'd.'¹²

Again, on the 5th of March 1745, the same newspaper carried:

'Dropt on Friday last, between the Grey-hound Tavern in the Strand and Charing-Cross, a Saphire Ring set round with Brilliants, one on each Side. Whoever brings it to Mr. Shruder, Goldsmith, at the Golden Ewer in Spur-Street, Leicester-Fields, shall have Five Guineas Reward; or if the Ring should be offer'd to be sold or pledg'd, the Person stopping it shall be entitled to the same Reward. Note. No greater Reward will be given.'¹³



Illus. above: the admission entry relating to Anne Shruder, Bethlem Hospital.

On the 24th of January 1741, nine months after giving birth to her sixth child, James, Ann Shruder was admitted to the Bethlem hospital in Moorfields. She was discharged on November the 8th 1742.¹⁴ No record survives of the reason for her admission, but post-natal depression seems most likely. The warrant for her admission was signed by Edward Holloway, a city distiller, who served as Treasurer of the Hospital. Sureties were provided by: 'Mr. John Holst, Chaser in bishop's Court in Durham yard in the Strand' and 'Mr Christian Hillan Silversmith at the Golden Ball near the Seven Dials in great Earl Street St. Gileses in the fields.' On admission, all patients were required to have sureties to put up a bond to cover any additional payments required. The Hospital paid for care, but other costs,

including transport, funerals etc. would be met from the sureties. It was unusual for the sureties to be spouses or parents, although they were sometimes relatives.¹⁵

The two sureties in this instance, Holst and Hillan, were clearly not only business contacts but family friends. Hillan's name suggests a German origin and Holst was a member of a Scandinavian and German Lutheran community in London.

Christian Hillan.

Hillan had entered his first mark, as a largeworker, on the 20th of April 1736, giving an address in Bishop's Court, Durham Yard – the address given by Holst in 1740 as a surety for Ann Shruder. Hillan had moved to Great Earl Street at the time of entering his second mark on 4th June 1739 and then to the 'Crown and Golden Ball' in Compton Street when entering his third mark.

Hillan's surviving silverwork is invariably in the rococo manner and varies from the curiously idiosyncratic to the exceptionally fine. The 'silver dog' value 12 shillings stolen from his shop in 1724 by George Cheek was surely an example of the curious¹⁶. How many of the pieces marked by Hillan might have been supplied by Shruder, or, indeed, vice versa, requires a closer investigation.

Hillan's business ended abruptly when he was refused further credit by the silver refiner, John Foxall – who was also, of course, the refiner who supplied de Lamerie. By the end of August 1743, Hillan had disappeared – perhaps travelling back to Germany – and his Compton Street premises were occupied by William Cripps, who entered his first mark from there on the 31st of August 1743. A case was brought in the Court of Chancery by Foxall [the 'orator'] but the evidence is one-sided because Hillan did not respond. Foxall claimed:

'3 or 4 years ago he became acquainted with one Christian Hillan late of London Working Silversmith (Defendant) and until the latter end of February last had frequent dealings with him – buying from him divers quantities of old fashioned plate and ingots of silver which he brought to Foxall as useless in his way of trade and fit only to be melted down and by selling to him diverse quantities of new Sterling silver fit to be used and worked up by him in his said trade of a working silversmith and by means of such their dealings the said Christian Hillan did become and was indebted to your orator upon the balance of Accounts in the month of February last in the sum of one hundred and four pounds and upwards no part of which sum he has at any time paid ...or made... any answer or satisfaction for ... and on or about the 21st or 22nd Day of February last the said Christian Hillan came to your Orator's House and did bring with him an Ingott of silver and likewise some old fashioned plate to be melted down which he delivered to your Orator's Servants for that Purpose and directed that the same should be weighed and at the same time he brought along with him and delivered his own book to your Orator's Servants wherein Entrys were made as well of the old plate and silver from time to time sold and delivered to your Orator and of the weight and quantity thereof as likewise of the new Sterling silver which he had from time to time Bought and been supplied with .. and of the price thereof and your Orators Servants having received the said Ingott and likewise the old fashioned silver on Account of your Orator did proceed to weigh and did weigh the same in the Presence of the said Christian Hillan and the weight of the said Ingott was one hundred and six ounces and four pennyweights and no more and the weight of the said old Sterling plate was fifty six ounces and five pennyweights and no more and the same was accordingly entered in your orator's book and Creditt given to the said Christian Hillan on Account thereof and after the same had been done the said Christian Hillan did request.... that your orator would supply him with two hundred ounces or some other such large quantity of New Sterling Silver which he pretended to have occasion for to working in his way of trade and desired your orator to give him credit for which your orator

having then but an ill opinion of the ability and circumstances of the said Christian Hillan and thinking that he had already Creditted him too far absolutely refused to do which the said Christian Hillan pretending greatly to resent immediately snatched his own book from your orator's servants and refused to let them make any entry of the weight thereof therein which by your orator's orders they offered to do and to give his Account credit for the same. ...'

Foxall stated that less than a week afterwards Christian Hillan sold off his Stock in trade and household goods and 'went away from his house and has ever since absconded and has not since paid to Foxall one penny of his debt' 'notwithstanding the said Christian Hillan did some time afterwards send one or two persons to your orator to demand of him the said ingot of silver and old fashioned plate which had been so delivered and sold' .. Foxall had refused to give it and told them that the silver on assay was 'worth forty three pounds fifteen shillings and ten pence and no more 'viz. The ingot to be worth five shillings and four pence three farthings per ounce and no more and the old sterling plate to be worth five shillings and seven pence per ounce and no more'. Foxall further stated that last Easter term Hillan had caused an action of trover to be brought against him in the Court of Common Pleas for the value of the plate. The case had come before the Chief Justice in Trinity term last when, 'contrary to the opinion of the Chief Justice', the Jury found for the Plaintiff and 'Forty three pounds fifteen shillings and ten pence damages' ... 'which your orator knowing the poverty of the said Christian Hillan and that there was no prospect of your orators being able to obtain even the remaining part of his said debt' ' chose to submit to the decision of the court' and a judgement was entered against him 'for about fifty nine or sixty pounds'. Foxall said that he has sought to offset this payment against the debt that he claims Hillan owes to him, but Hillan resolutely refused to accept that. Foxall therefore sought to prevent Hillan executing the judgement of the court of Common Pleas and to persuade the court of Chancery to allow the payment of the fifty nine or sixty pounds against the debt that Hillan has with him.

John Holst.

John Holst was a second-generation immigrant. He was born on 22nd January 1704/5 to John and Mary Holst of St. Martin in the Fields and baptised in the parish church on the 27th. The family also attended the German Lutheran Church in the Savoy. Sven Holst, born in Copenhagen, and living in the same parish of St. Martin's, was possibly an uncle. Sven was one of the witnesses to the naturalisation of Nicholas Clausen, also a member of the Lutheran congregation at the Savoy¹⁷. In 1732, John, or Johann, Holst married Sophia Borrow, the daughter of another immigrant from Denmark, Mathew Borrow [Matthius Barrau]. Mathew had died in 1729 leaving the large part of his estate [nearly £1000] to Sophia, his only daughter¹⁸. In 1732 Holst took an apprentice, William Northwood, of St. Margaret's Westminster.¹⁹ Holst died in 1752, intestate, his death recorded in the registers of the Lutheran church in the Savoy on the 26th of September. Sophia had died in 1748.

In June 1749, Bankruptcy proceedings were initiated against James Shruder. The petitioning creditor was George Hindmarsh who, as a specialist maker of waiters and salvers, had obviously been supplying Shruder²⁰. A certificate was issued the following month. The bankruptcy did not, however, bring his business to an end. Silverwork struck with his mark appears as late as 1753²¹. Nevertheless, by the mid 1750's Shruder had given up his silversmithing business, moved to Great Marlborough Street, and turned instead to the manufacture of papier maché. ²²The material was used as an alternative to plaster in interior decoration and the manufacture of picture frames.

Shruder showed an interest in poetry by subscribing towards the publication of ‘Poems on Several Occasions’, by Samuel Boyce in 1757 and in music by subscribing towards ‘Twelve English Songs with their Symphonias’, by Thomas Chilcot, published in 1750. He was also a Freemason and was made Steward of the United Grand Lodge in 1753²³.

He died in 1765 and was buried on the 22nd of December in St. Ann’s Soho²⁴. There was no will and administration of his estate was granted on the 28th of June 1766 to his widow, Anne. The ‘Public Advertiser’ of July 11th carried notice of an impending auction of his effects²⁵:

‘To be Sold by Auction. By Miles Nightingall, this Day, the 11th instant, By Order of the Administratrix of Mr. James Shruder, Papier Maché Manufacturer, deceased, The Lease of his late Dwelling House, situated on the North side near the East End of Great Marlborough-street St. James, held by Lease of which there were eighty Years unexpired at Lady Day last, at the yearly Rent of 30l.

The same Time will be sold, the Houshold Furniture, his curious Moulds, Casts, Utensils, Stock in Trade, and other Effects.

To be viewed till the Sale, which will begin punctually at Twelve. The lease will be put up at One. Catalogues with particulars may be had as above. The Lease may be seen and further information concerning the Premises had, applying to Mr. Nightingall, in Golden-square.’

There is no further record of Anne Shruder. It is possible that the Thomas Shruder, of Paper Buildings, Kings Bench Walk, named in a Chancery case in 1765/6 was James’s eldest child. A Thomas Shruder emigrated to Georgia in about 1769 and became Notary Public in the town of Savannah. He died there in 1775.

¹ For the Coffee pot, see VAM, M.312-1975; for the tea kettle, see the Gans Collection, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.

² Possibly, it has been suggested, a misspelling of a member of the Crespin family.

³ In Arthur Grimwade, ‘*London Goldsmiths 1697-1837*’, third edition, the sum is incorrectly given as £32.

⁴ National Archives Prob 11/789/326

⁵ See, for example, the Cahn Collection for flatware by Lamerie overstruck by Shruder.

⁶ See, for example, Helen Clifford, ‘*Paul de Lamerie and the organization of the London Goldsmiths’ Trade in the First Half of the Eighteenth Century*’, in ‘*Paul de Lamerie at the Sign of The Golden Ball*’, exhibition catalogue, Goldsmiths Hall, London 1990, p. 25. Clifford discusses the possibility that Shruder may have supplied the Ewer and Basin marked by George Wickes in 1735, as well as the coffee jug of 1738, marked by Lamerie [exhibition cat. 85], the Mountrath cup and cover of 1742 [exhib. cat. no. 90], a teapot of 1742

marked by Lamerie, [exhib cat. no. 106], and a bowl of 1744 marked by Lamerie [Met. Museum, Irwin Untermyer Collection, accession no. 68.141.64].

⁷ Allegations for Marriage Licences issued by the Vicar General for the Archbishop of Canterbury.

⁸ British Museum, Prints and Drawings, Heal Collection of Trade Cards.

⁹ British Museum, Prints and Drawings, Heal Collection of Trade Cards.

¹⁰ Daily Gazeteer for Saturday, 18th November 1738, Burney Newspaper Collection, British Library; Old Bailey online, t17381206-28

¹¹ Daily Advertiser September 17th, 1743, British Library Burney Newspaper Collection.

¹² Daily Advertiser, April 16th, 1744, British Library, Burney Newspaper Collection.

¹³ Daily Advertiser, March 5th, 1745, British Library, Burney Newspaper Collection. A very similar advertisement on May 15th, 1745, in the same newspaper may be related.

¹⁴ Archives of the Bethlem Hospital, held by the Museum of the Mind, London, admission, and discharge papers filmed and digitised by Ancestry.

¹⁵ My thanks to David Luck of the Museum of the Mind for this insight into the practices at the Bethlem Hospital.

¹⁶ See Old Bailey online, t17420224-43.

¹⁷ His name appears as Nicolay Claussen in the registers of the German Lutheran Church, Savoy in 1736. The registers now available online through Ancestry, Piece 4628.

¹⁸ Nat.Arch. Prob 11/634/196.

¹⁹ Nat. Arch. IR1/13

²⁰ Nat. Arch. B/4/12 p. 56, no 3099. See John Culme, *'The Embarrassed Goldsmith 1729-1831'*, in the Silver Society Journal 10 (1998).

²¹ See, for example, 'Church Plate of Dorset', parish of Melbury Sampford, the plate includes an oblong silver-gilt Box for containing the bread, of 1753. At the side of the box is engraved the sacred monogram within rays, and at the bottom is inscribed, *'The Gift of Mrs. Strangways Homer to the Parish of Melbury'*.

²² See: Thomas Mortimer, the *'Universal Director'*, published 1763 but Shrudder had moved to Marlborough Street, and, presumably, started his new line of business some years earlier.

²³ See: Jonathan Scot, *'The Pocket Companion and History of Free Masons'*, publ. 1754.

²⁴ The parish register notes *'from St. James's.'*

²⁵ British Library, Burney Newspaper Collection.