

Spencer Gold Ice Pails

Acquisition of a pair of gold ice pails, which were among the many treasures presented to the 1st Duke and Duchess of Marlborough. They were made in England around 1680-90. In 1744 they were part of a large bequest of Marlborough plate made by Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, to her grandson, John Spencer, and remained in the collection of the Earls Spencer until the present Earl, seeking funds for the restoration of Althorp Hall, offered the pails to the British Museum by private treaty sale. The pails have two lion masks and hinged handles: the upper part plain except for moulded lip and incised line below; lower half has flat spiral fluting and liate ornament above; low spreading foot similarly decorated with spiral fluting. English, late 17th century.

Nation/region

London

Grant awarded

£140,000

Award date

21/01/1982