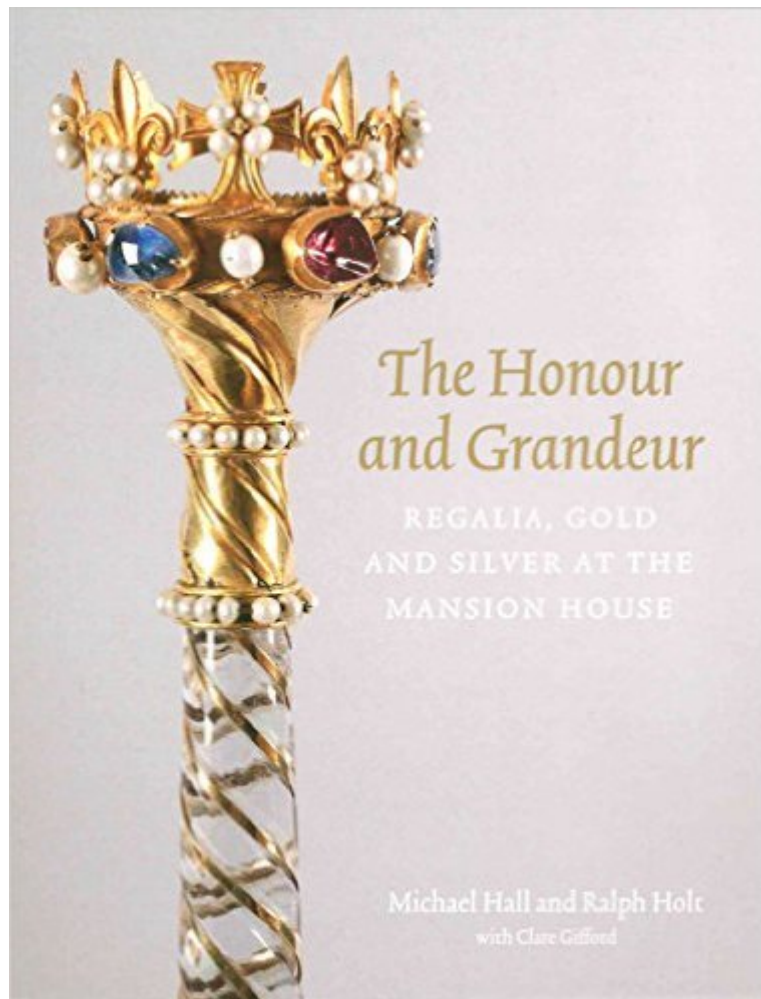


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The Honour And Grandeur: Regalia, Gold And Silver At The Mansion House



Synopsis

An inscription on a silver-gilt cup and cover presented to the Lord Mayor in 1741 records that the intention of the gift was to increase "the Honour and Grandeur" of the City of London. It is just one piece of an exceptional collection of plate kept at Mansion House "along with dozens of pieces of official regalia that represent the Mayoralty" which is constantly in use today to uphold that honor and in the grandest way possible. The continued use of ceremonial plate by the City of London is a rare survival of medieval practices of display. Though the collection has very little silver from before 1800, the quality and quantity of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century pieces is extraordinary. Before Mansion House was built between 1732 and 1754, the Lord Mayor's guild hall or his own house had been used for formal entertaining by the City, and any silver presented during the year remained with the guild or became the Lord Mayor's personal property. Since the mid-eighteenth century, however, a vast and eclectic collection has grown up, seen regularly at banquets and events at the Guildhall and Mansion House. This new book will present over 80 of the finest and most historic pieces. New photography will be accompanied by full details and a commentary. Starting with the unique medieval Crystal Sceptre of 1420, seen only at the inauguration of the Lord Mayor and at Coronations, the regalia includes several famous items, notably the sixteenth-century gold and enamel Chain of SS, the great Mace of 1735 and the Pearl Sword, carried before the Sovereign on visits to the City. The silver-gilt and silver, used constantly during the year, includes pieces by some of the greatest names of English silversmithing "Paul de Lamerie and Paul Storr, for example" but also by rarer more modern masters "Latino Movio and Omar Ramsden" masterpieces previously completely unknown to silver historians. Though intended to introduce the collection "as well as the history of the Lord Mayors, the City guilds and Mansion House itself, and the formation of the collection" to a broad audience, the book will be of interest to specialists in silver, who will discover many masterpieces of style and technique. This volume is the third in the series on the treasures of Mansion House, following *The Harold Samuel Collection of Dutch and Flemish Paintings* by Michael Hall and Clare Gifford (2012) and *Magnificent Marble Statues: A Guide to the Sculpture at the Mansion House* by Julius Bryant and Clare Gifford (2013).

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