

# A Danish Large Oval Pewter Platter with a design based on an English Hogarth Engraving of the 1730s.

With thanks to [www.pewtersellers.com](http://www.pewtersellers.com) for this detail

30" x 20" decorated Danish Oval Platter by Nicolai Hindrich Ludvik Hagelsten, Haderslev, Denmark (master 1803) his mark to rear (see below). Decorated in the central well after the Hogarth print, "A Midnight Modern Conversation" (see below) with various animal hunting scenes to the rim. The engraving is undoubtedly Germanic and of very high status. Provenance: Henry Cochran, Point Pleasant, Pennsylvania. It is in excellent condition, and a great looking piece.



*A Midnight Modern Conversation* is one of Hogarth's most famous, popular and pirated early engravings. Its publication did much to spread Hogarth's fame to the continent. The original etching with engraving in black ink was produced c1732/33, and republished from time to time.

(Whereas Hogarth was very satirical as to the mixture of English and British social groups within his debauched scene depicted in this engraving, this could be the meeting of a Mid European businessman's club, and so misses a key point of the original satire which would not be missed by its London audience of the time. Those who could not read words could 'read' a picture – or engraving. )



The scene is said to be the interior of St. John's Coffee-house in Shire Lane, Temple Bar near the Law Courts in London. The 'Conversation' is a 'conversation' in the sense of a 'conversation picture' - a narrative image depicting everyday life. The time on the clock is 4 am and the candles are all burnt out. The maudlin and drunk patrons, all men, are gathered around a large circular table on which stands a huge punchbowl, empty glasses and broken clay pipes. In the foreground a drunken man, said to be Hogarth's friend Dr. Ranby, unsteadily clings to the back of a chair and pours a bottle of wine onto the bald head of the prostrate figure of the prize-fighter James Figg. On the far right a politician in a huge periwig (possibly Hogarth's friend Ebenezer Forrester) sets fire to his ruffle instead of his pipe, seated next to him a man in a tie wig is about to be sick into the fireplace and complacently ladling punch and smoking a pipe on the far side of the table is the parson Dr Cornelius Ford, a reprobate cousin of Dr. Johnson. Behind him is a noisy man waving his glass in the air, said to be John Harrison a tobacconist, the lawyer sitting with his wig askew on Ford's right is Kettleby 'a vociferous bar Orator' and the glum, deaf man in a white turban is a bookbinder named Chandler who worked for Hogarth. On the extreme left a man has fallen asleep with his mouth open in a tilted back chair, hats and discarded wigs hang on the wall, while on the floor is a pile of empty bottles, broken pipes and an overflowing chamber pot.

In showing all the degrees of drunkenness, Hogarth was passing comment on his opinion of the social behaviour of prominent businessmen and lawyers, for nearly all the figures can be identified (despite Hogarth's assertion that they were imaginary).

Ref: Paulson - Hogarth's Graphic Work no. 128 ii of iii.



Mark of Nicolai Hindrich Ludvik Hagelsten, Haderslev, Denmark