SOLD - The Walrond-Burdett-Coutts Coolers: A Set of Four George IV Silver Wine Coolers, Paul Storr, London, 1825

Paul Storr

REF: 11990

Height: 24.3 cm (9.6") Weight: 19.5 kg

SOLD - cast with grapevine, the bases with four heraldic tigers in high relief, the rims engraved with arms and the liners with three matching crests, fully marked

The first set of arms are those of Joseph Lyons Walrond of Antigua and Vienna exposition of 1873(1752-1815), 6th Marquess of Vallado, probably employed here by his widow, the former Caroline Codrington (d. 1833), whom he had married in St George's Hanover Square in 1797. The second arms are those of The Rt Hon William Lehman Ashmead Bartlett Burdett-Coutts MP PC (1851-1921) and his wife Angela (1814-1906), suo jure Baroness Burdett-Coutts and heiress of Harriet, Duchess of St Albans; they married in 1881.

The Walronds of Dulford House descended from Humphrey Walrond (c. 1600-1670), deputy governor of Barbados. A loyal Royalist, he was banished upon the arrival of the new Commonwealth governor in 1651 and appears to have entered the service of the Spanish Crown; on 5 August 1653, Philip IV created him a grandee of the first class, with the titles of Marchese de Vallado and Conde de Parama y de Valderonda. The family remained in the West Indies well into the eighteenth century but subsequently moved to Dulrond House, Devon. The estate was sold in 1891, at which time the Burdett-Couttses may have acquired these coolers.

In 1837, Angela Burdett had inherited the Coutts fortune, becoming the richest woman in England at the age of twenty-three. The youngest child of Sir Francis Burdett and Sophie Coutts, a daughter of banker Thomas Coutts, Angela was the heiress of her step-grandmother, Harriet, Duchess of St Albans. A popular actress and great beauty in her youth, Harriet Mellon married firstly banker Thomas Coutts, and secondly, after inheriting Coutts & Co. and £900,000, the 9th Duke of St Albans, 20 years her junior. The duchess believed that Coutts' fortune should remain in Thomas's family, and chose Angela as her heir, on condition that she take the family name and never marry a foreigner.

For more than four decades, Angela Burdett-Coutts spent lavish sums on philanthrophy, earning widespread acclaim, a peerage in her own right, and the admiration of the Prince of Wales. In 1881, however, she married her young American secretary. A bitter legal battle ensued, with the Coutts trust eventually passing to her sister, Clara Burdett Money, Angela retaining a two-fifths life interest. Clara in turn changed her own name, which led to Punch's memorable verse: 'Money takes the name of Coutts / Superfluous and funny / For everyone considers Coutts / Synonymous with Money.'

Lady Burdett-Coutts died in 1906, having given away more than £3 million, and nearly 30,000 mourners came to pass by her coffin. Her husband continued to serve as an MP until his death in 1921, occupying the seat for Westminster which his father-in-law Sir Francis Burdett had held for thirty years.