



Around the Table in 19 Objects



THE
HUNT

MUSEUM



Prologue Room

Tour Stop 1

HCM 217



Drinking Horn

Northern German or Scandinavian,
late 15th century.

This drinking horn is typical of those made throughout Europe between the 17th and the 19th century. Most Northern European versions from the 15th century and later have clawed feet and Late Gothic style ornament. This particular example is characteristic of the late Medieval "Griffin's Foot" or "Dragon's Foot" style, in which the feet are separately made and soldered on.

In Ireland at the King's table drinks were served in horns adorned with silver and gold. Drinks would have comprised of beer and wine. Up to the 12th century monks were the sole producers of beer in Ireland. Drinking horns were frequently given as gifts and used as charter horns to seal land and other legal agreements. The symbolic and ceremonial value placed upon drinking horns meant they were most cherished and passed down through generations.

Figure of Christ the Good Shepherd

Indo-Portuguese, 17th Century

Despite the fact that it is a religious figure this artefact has much to do with food as it is linked to the Portuguese colonisation of India.

The Portuguese reached India after the discovery of the Route of the Cape of Hope by Vasco Da Gama which allowed trade from Asia to reach Europe without passing through the Ottoman Empire.

The majority of this Asian trade consisted of spices, that were considered by Europeans to be the most luxurious and expensive of products. Consequently this ivory religious artefact is a true reminder of how important spices and other products were in the formation of trade and the expansion of empires.

HCM 098



Other notable objects: Goblet (HCA 618), Jug (DG 016)

Amber Flask

Medieval Rooms

Tour

CG 080



Flasks are personal items used for storing drinks such as wine or water. A crucial component of travelling, flasks were born from the need to carry and store water. In early prehistory flasks were made from animal skins and hide.

Augmentations in size and diversity of material indicated the social status of the flasks' owner. Wealthy people would have flasks made from silver or amber while people from lower classes would carry flasks made from earthenware.

This specific flask was made around the 14th or 15th century. It's amber composition indicating that the owner of this flask was wealthy. The flask would also have been used to display the economic power of its owner.

Salt Cellar

Salt began its journey as an essential ingredient with the development of agriculture. Its value not just in flavouring but in preserving was quickly noted. The 'Celts' are credited with the creation of early salt mining and the development of the European salt trade. Salt mined in Central Europe was carried to the Middle East, North Africa and China.

The Irish Annals (432 AD - 17th Century AD) make reference to salt as a prized trade good. In the 8th century it is recorded that the people of the Aran Islands paid tribute to the King of Cashel in salt. The modern term "salary" is derived from the Roman practice of paying soldiers in salt.

Salt Cellars, or canisters became increasingly elaborate during the Middle Ages. The size and decorative nature of cellars and their placement at the head of the table came to denote the status of the householder. Small, lesser cellars were distributed along tables and the placement of guests in relation to these was used to denote their status, thus coining the term "below the salt".

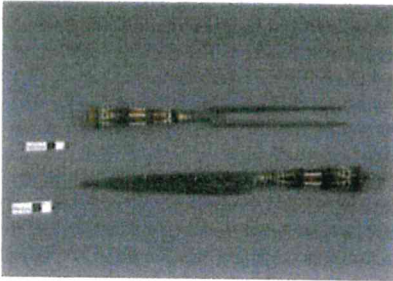
In the late 18th and early 19th centuries the Industrial revolution rendered salt and salt cellars widespread and available to everyone.

HCM 177



Tour Stop 3

HCM 214 A-B



Iron Serving Fork and Knife
Northern German, approx. 17th century

An ornamental iron serving knife and fork with ivory handles inset with thin sheets of amber. A status symbol for their owner, the rare materials used to fashion these serving utensils indicate wealth and exclusivity.

This fork and knife would have been used for ceremonial carving and serving at formal dinner parties.

Horse Aquamanile
German, 15th Century

The Latin term *aquamanile* translates to "vessels from which water is poured" usually for hand washing in both domestic and liturgical contexts. Aquamanile can be earthenware or metal and variously take the form of animals, birds, equestrian figures and mythical creatures. This horse aquamanile was made from cast brass in the German city of Nuremberg in the 15th century and would have been used by a wealthy patron for hand-washing or for pouring water at the dinner table. No similar vessels are known from Medieval Ireland, although metal tableware was imported from the Continent and two lion aquamaniles have been found in Scotland.

CG 073



Captains' Room

Tour Stop 4

Wine Ewer

Chinese, Qing Dynasty late 18th or 19th century

This rare and novel piece, used to store and pour wine, denotes the importance of the social aspects of food in not only European culture but also in Asian culture.

Dated to approximately the late 18th or 19th century Qing dynasty, once this object made its way to Europe it would have been considered a prestigious object to own due to the rarity of novel Chinese porcelain objects such as this.

MG 116D



Sweetmeat Dish in the Form of a Hare

Chinese, late Ming dynasty 15th Century

MG 116B



This small Chinese porcelain, sweetmeat or food dish on three circular feet was originally intended for the Japanese market, where such dishes are known as Mokozuke. These Chinese blue and white dishes were made in sets of 5 or 10 for the specific purpose of serving food during the kaiseki meal that accompanied the formal Japanese tea ceremony. The ceremony is considered a spiritual process in which participants remove themselves from the mundane world, seeking harmony and inner peace. Hosts of tea ceremonies are considered masters of the art of serving tea, through extensive study of philosophy, calligraphy, art and aesthetics.

All aspects of a tea ceremony, from how the tea is poured to the dishes selected to distribute the meal are designed to show respect and friendship to guests. This piece is shaped like a Hare. In Taoist mythology it is said that this hare dwells on the moon where it ground the ingredients for the Elixir of Immortality.

Tour Stop 5

Hors-d'oeuvre or Sweetmeat Set

Irish, 16th Century

These sets of serving dishes, usually consisting of five small, interlocking dishes within a larger tray, are delftware from 18th century Ireland.

This set probably formed part of a standard dinner service, and they clearly demonstrate how meals, manners and table etiquette became increasingly sophisticated in affluent Irish homes as the 18th century progressed. Each individual dish would have been placed on the dinner table to serve portions of sauces, pickles or condiments.

HCL 036-041



Other Notable Objects: Porcelain dish (DG-055), Chinese bowl (DG-066)

Charlemont Armorial Dinner Service

The Earldom of Charlemont, now extinct, was an Irish peerage created in 1763.

This dinner service, which may have been over 100 pieces in number, was a gift from William Borroughs to the First Earl of Charlemont, James Caulfield.

The Earl supported Borroughs, when he fled poverty stricken India to make his fortune in 1789. Our collection comprises two Chinese porcelain plates, one Staffordshire porcelain plate and a large Chinese porcelain platter. Armorial were used throughout Europe to demonstrate lineage and elite status.

HCL 085, HCL 059, HM
1998.03, HM 2000.05



Other Notable Objects: Irish spirit barrels (HCL 031), Delmain plate (HCL 033)

Tour Stop 6

MG 145



Four Cats Menu Card, Plat Del Dia
Spanish, Pablo Picasso, c1900

The celebrated Four Cats cafe, for which this sketch is a menu card, served as a meeting place for avant-garde artists and intellectuals in turn of the century Barcelona.

The bohemian environment of the restaurant provided the stimulus that Picasso, then an aspiring artist, sought. His first one man show was staged in the Four Cats cafe in 1900. This menu card was designed specifically to promote the dish of the day, Plat Del Dia, the name of which would have been inserted into the large black space below.

This work was on display in the Hunt home for many years.

Pottery Cabinet Tour Stop 7

MG 130



Islam spread rapidly during the 7th century. Potter's work reveals links with the artistic traditions of countries that were gradually absorbed into the Islamic world, as well as those that merely came into contact with it.

Techniques including lusterware, tin glazing and underglaze painting were invented by Islamic potters and artists. The simple shape and decoration of this bowl indicate that it was made for daily use, while the iridescent blue of the glaze is due to the salt content of the soil in which it was buried.

Other Notable Objects:
Tankard (Mg 076),
Jar with Lid (DG 058)

Tour Stop 8

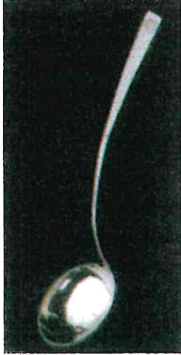
Horn Cup

This is a unique cup made from horn with silver gilt mounts on the rim and foot. The mounts are stamped with the makers mark I.P, John Purcell of Limerick.

HCL 009



HCL 004



Soup Ladle

Ireland, 18th century

This silver soup ladle, with a deep plain bowl and a long curved handle with a recurved hook end was made in Limerick by Joseph Johns (who became Mayor of Limerick in 1773). It illustrates the high value food and food vessels were awarded in wealthy families, and the ladle is inscribed with the monogram M.P on the handle. A silver ladle such as this would indicate wealth and status to any guests.

Pap Boat Feeding Vessel

Irish, Limerick, Joseph Johns 1760

This is a small, shallow vessel, similar in shape to a sauce-boat, with a long, wide lip convenient for those who are too weak to feed themselves. Pap is said to be the sound a baby makes when hungry or while it is feeding, and the word applies to soft or semi-liquid food given to infants and the sick. This pap boat is made of silver and devoid of decoration. The mark of Joseph Johns is struck twice on the bottom. Johns had a workshop on Mary Street in Limerick's English town. He was elected Mayor of Limerick in 1773 and died two years later.

HCL 006



Other Notable Objects: **Cup (Coconut and Silver)** (HCL 08), **Salt Container** (HCL 05), **Drinking Glasses** (DG 070-076)

Tour Stop 9

HCA 678



Wine Strainer

Roman, 1st Century AD

This short handled, sheet bronze wine strainer was used as a cooking utensil. It has a round bottomed bowl with steep, straight sides and an outward curving rim. In Roman culture wine strainers were used to filter sediments from wine and served both utilitarian and ritual functions, they were widely used and other examples of 1st century Roman wine strainers have been found in Pompeii and Herculaneum.

Tour Stop 10

MG 015

Beaked Flagon Etruscan, 5th Century

Made by the Etruscan people of Ancient Italy, this bronze flagon or Oenochoe would once have been used by the very wealthy Etruscans to store and pour wine and water. In the Celtic tradition a wine filled oenochoe in a grave suggests a treasured possession, designed to make a prince happy in the next world. This particular flagon was in the possession of John and Gertrude Hunt for many years and it has been said that dinner guests would often be poured water or wine from this 5th century piece.



Other Notable Objects: Oenochoe (HCA 679), Vase (MG 014)

Tour Stop 11

Neolithic Scrapers & Sickles



The Hunt Collection includes a range of Neolithic scrapers, many that are approximately 5000 years old. Scrapers were used for butchering animals and for harvesting grain. Scrapers were also used to remove hides from hunted animals, the hide would then have been used to make leather, cords and blankets. During the Neolithic period family clans often ate meals communally and their diets consisted of meat, grains, wild fruits, nuts and vegetables.

The Neolithic, or New Stone Age, was the beginning of the end of the Stone Age. The Neolithic period in Ireland began approximately 4 thousand years ago. In the Neolithic period farm animals were first domesticated and agriculture began. In Ireland sickles were used by early farmers to harvest grain. These grains would have originally been wheat and barley. Entire families, including children, would have assisted in the harvesting of grain, which would then be stored or ground down and made into bread.

Tour Stop 12

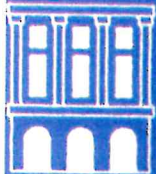
Stone Quern

This piece of a stone Quern was probably part of a rotary quern used by Neolithic people to process grains. Quern stones usually come in pairs, the lower stationary stone called a Quern and the upper mobile stone is called a hand stone. Grains that were harvested included wheat, barley and corn.



Other Notable Objects: Link Sinker (HCA 473), Bowl (HCA 461)

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