SUGAR BOX, Boston, c. 1702, Edward Winslow. L. 7¾", H. 5⅜". (Mabel Brady Garvan Collection, 1935.152)

1 One of the most important pieces of American colonial silver, this sugar box by Edward Winslow and the two other versions illustrated as Figs. 2 and 3 are unique among examples of this form in their use of human and mythological representations. Their iconography not only suggests that they had marital and amatory associations—as did their antecedents, Italian marriage chests of the 16th century—but reflects existing views on the procreative powers of sugar.

Edward Winslow's Sugar Boxes:

Colonial Echoes of Courtly Love*

by Edward J. Nygren

Three sugar boxes (Figs. 1–3) by the Boston silversmith Edward Winslow (1669–1753), all probably created within a few months of each other in 1702, exhibit a richness of decoration and a technical proficiency that place them among the best American silver of their period.[1] While the monumental size of the form in general attests to the great value placed on sugar in the late seventeenth century,[2] human representation on the bosses and lids of these three boxes make them unique among American and European

*A longer version of this paper was originally written as a special project under the supervision of Jules D. Prown. In addition to Professor Prown, I am indebted to Messrs. Charles Montgomery and Theodore Stebbins of Yale University and Frank Sommer of the Henry Francis du Point Winterthur Museum for their critical readings of this study at various stages in its preparation.

1. A fourth box by Winslow in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts (Boston) is not included in this discussion since, although it follows the form of the other three, it does not share their representational embellishments. The Ford and Winterthur boxes are both dated 1702. Stylistically the Garvan example acts as a bridge between the Ford and Winterthur boxes and thus probably dates from the same period of manufacture. Although stylistic variations are briefly discussed herein, for a more thorough analysis of style, as well as an expanded discussion of other matters covered below, see my unpublished paper "Edward Winslow's Sugar Boxes: Colonial Echoes of Courtly Love and Symbols of Marriage" in the Garvan Office object file, Yale University Art Gallery. Also see: Kathryn C. Buhler and Graham Hood, *American Silver: Garvan and Other Collections in the Yale University Art Gallery* (New Haven, 1970), I, 57–59.

For biographical information on Edward Winslow see the article by Katherine Amend Kellock in *Dictionary of American Biography*, XX, 394–395. Additional material appears in John Marshall Phillips' "Edward Winslow, Goldsmith, Sheriff, and Colonel," *Bulletin of the Association in Fine Arts at Yale University*, VI, 3 (June 1935), 45–46; and in Helen Comstock's "Silver by Edward Winslow of Boston, 1669–1753," *Connoisseur*, 108, 482 (December 1941), 205–209.

2. Until the fifteenth century in England, the high cost of sugar restricted its use to the court and nobility. By the sixteenth century, however, its price had dropped sufficiently to bring it within the reach of more people. The expansion of the sugar-refining industry in Europe throughout the seventeenth century, partially due to the increased demand created by the introduction of three exotic drinks—tea, coffee, and chocolate—into the European diet early in the century, brought about further price reduction. This reduction in the value of sugar was reflected in the diminution in the size of sugar containers early in the eighteenth century. For a discussion of the decrease in sugar prices see: W. R. Aykroyd, *Sweet Malefactor: Sugar, Slavery and Human Society* (London, 1967), p. 26ff., and G. T. Surface, *The Story of Sugar* (New York, 1910), p. 22ff. That sugar was added to coffee, tea, and chocolate in varying amounts is recorded in *The Manner of Making Coffee, Tea, and Chocolate* (London, 1685), attributed to Phillippe Sylvestre Dufour.

examples.[3] I believe it can be shown that Winslow's boxes, utilitarian though they may be, embody concepts of courtly love and marriage, and that their iconography relates them to the art and literature of the time.

As in the case of the oldest extant American sugar box by John Coney (Fig. 4),[4] Winslow's basic form was probably derived from an English prototype carried to Boston by a new governor, returning merchant, or emigrating colonist, like the widow of Jose Glover who brought with her in 1638 "a great silver trunke with 4 knop to sta[n]d on the table with sugar."[5] Moreover, it is evident from another box by Coney (Colonial Williamsburg) that an oval casket with gadrooning, acanthus leaves, and animal feet was a standard form at the turn of the eighteenth century. But on this basic form, Edward Winslow superimposed a scheme of decoration that sets the three illustrated versions dramatically apart from other known examples.

These boxes show remarkable formal and iconographic affinities with Italian *cassoni* of the mid-sixteenth century. Despite their elliptical shape, they are conceived as four-sided chests, their corners accented by acanthus leaves and supported by animal feet. As in the pictured *cassone* (Fig. 5), the fluting focuses attention on a central motif; similarly, the cover and body are divided into comparable areas of decoration. Furthermore, *cassoni,* major items in a married couple's furnishing,[6] were often decorated

3. Although the function of these boxes was once in doubt, it is now generally accepted that they were used as receptacles for sugar. Not only do references to sugar boxes occur in contemporary sources, but the Garvan example appears in the 1770-inventory of Winslow's son as a sugar chest (Buhler and Hood, I, 59). For references to sugar boxes in seventeenth-century America see John Marshall Phillips, *American Silver* (New York, 1949) pp. 25–26, 38.

The nine extant American examples—four by Winslow, four by John Coney (1655–1722), and one attributed to Daniel Greenough (1685/6–1746) are discussed in Kathryn Buhler's excellent article "The Nine Colonial Sugar Boxes," *Antiques* LXXXV, 1 (Jan. 1964), 88–91. English examples appear in Charles James Jackson, *An Illustrated History of English Plate,* 2 vols. (London, 1911); Charles Oman, *English Domestic Silver,* 6th ed. (London, 1965); Judith Banister, *An Introduction to Old English Silver* (London, 1965). In addition to the English boxes published in these sources, there are two important examples, one of 1661 and another of 1676, in the collection of The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. I know of no published continental examples identified as sugar boxes. An oval-shaped chest, which could be a sugar box, is illustrated in Erik Andrén's *Swedish Silver* (New York, 1950); a German casket of this general form and size was sold at the Parke-Bernet, Sale 2705 (May 17, 1968), lot 30.

4. For Coney's prototype see Jackson, II, opp. p. 832. This is now in the collection of the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff.

5. Buhler, p. 88. An English box, probably by Andrew Moore, London, 1661 (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston) corresponds closely to this description.

6. Wilhelm von Bode, trans. Mary E. Herrick, *Italian Renaissance Furniture* (New York, 1921), p. 8. Bode notes (p. 11) that in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries items were kept in small decorated round or oval boxes, the predecessors of larger *cassoni*. Perhaps these smaller chests were the actual antecedents of the sugar box.

2 Engraved on the bottom—*Ex dono/ Sarah Middlecott/N. England/to M.M./ 1702*—this sugar box (L. 8½″; H. 6″) probably was a wedding present from Sarah Middlecott to her daughter, Mary. *(Collection of Mrs. Edsel B. Ford.)*

3 Inscribed $\frac{O}{D \cdot E}$ */Donum W·P 1702* on the bottom, this box (L. 7⅜″; H. 5″), a gift from William Partridge to Daniel and Elizabeth Oliver, perhaps marked the birth of their first son, Daniel, in June of that year. *(Courtesy, The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum.)*

with paintings or carvings illustrating battle scenes from epic poems and classical mythology.[7] Similar motifs appear on the bosses of Winslow's boxes, one of which has marital associations. How these ideas and forms traveled from mid-sixteenth century Italy to Boston of 1702 is not now known, but in the many similarities between these silver chests and *cassoni,* there exists what George Kubler has called "a virtual intersection"[8] and the possibility of some direct influence still to be discovered.

The foliate wreath and cupids, which grace the cover of the Garvan box (Fig. 6) as they do the ceilings of some seventeenth-century English manor houses,[9] suggest Winslow may have had access to published designs although no specific source can be cited. The architectural flavor of the decoration is also evident in the gadrooning and particularly in the trophy-like scenes on the sides (walls as it were) of the silver chest.[10] These various motifs became widespread in the Baroque period, but they were part of the vocabulary of ornament developed by Mannerist artists. Even the shape of the box is ultimately derived from the oval ground plan, which, with its inherent visual tensions, was a favorite of Mannerist architects. Symbolically equated with the female body,[11] the elliptical form was eminently suited to a receptacle for sugar, which the seventeenth century endowed with special procreative powers:

> Sugar, used in a proper manner, nourishes the body, generates good blood, cherishes the spirits, makes people prolific, strengthens children in the womb. . . .[12]

7. Frida Schottmüller, *Furniture and Interior Decoration of the Italian Renaissance* (New York, 1928), p. xx. For examples, see Paul Schubring's monumental study *Cassoni* (Leipzig, 1923).

8. George Kubler, "Time's Perfection and Colonial Art," *1968 Winterthur Conference Report* (Winterthur, Delaware, 1969), p. 9.

9. For examples, see George P. Bankart, *The Art of the Plasterer* (London and New York, 1909); and M. Jourdain, *English Decorative Plasterwork of the Renaissance* (London and New York, [1926]).

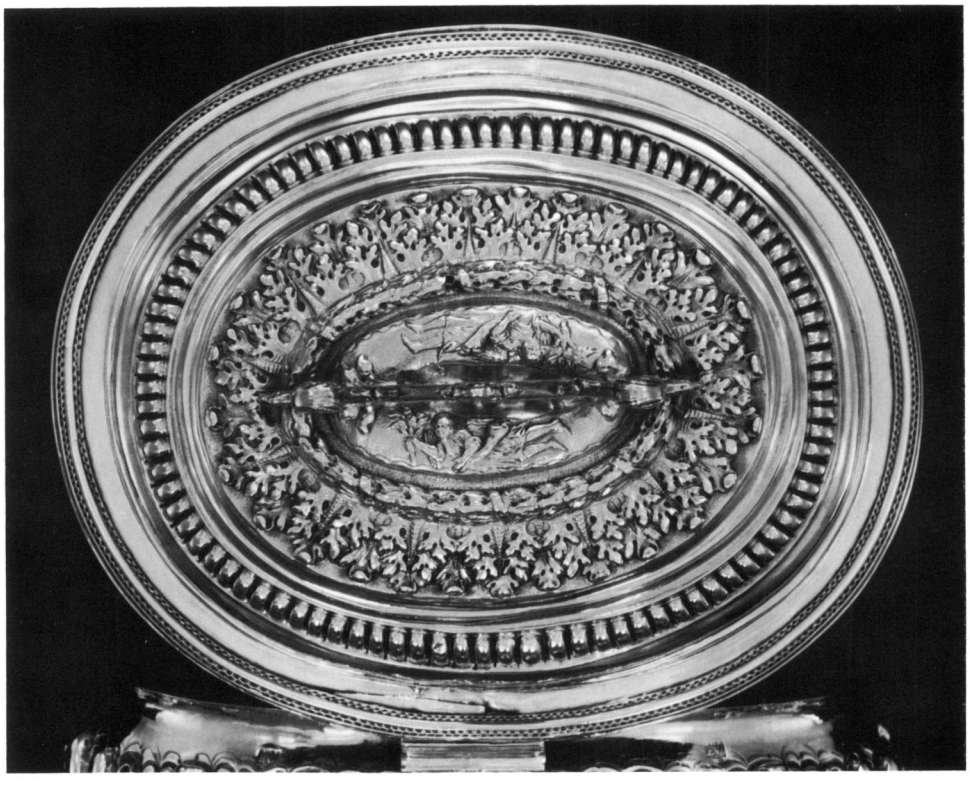
10. Such motifs occur in the designs of ornamentalists such as Jean Le Pautre (1618–1682), Jean Berain (1640–1711), and Daniel Marot (1663–1752), but there is no evidence that Winslow knew any of these.

11. Franzsepp Würtenberger in *Mannerism* (New York, Chicago, San Francisco, 1963) trans. Michael Heron, p. 84, points out that Zuccaro established a direct connection between the oval plan in architecture and the female body. Erwin Panofsky, however, in *Galileo as a Critic of the Arts* (The Hague, 1954) discusses the ellipse in relation to Kepler's laws of planetary movement. I have been unable to check Zuccaro's writings for Würtenberger's source. The egg-like quality of the oval was noted earlier, however, by Sebastiano Serlio (1475–1522) in his treatise on architecture, published in London in an English translation in 1611 *(Fifth Booke of Architecture,* folio 4). In his first book, Serlio demonstrates how to make an oval (folio 10 verso), which he divides into several parts that correspond closely to the divisions on the cover of Winslow's boxes.

12. Angelus Sala, *Saccharologiae* (1637), quoted in Benjamin Moseley, *A Treatise on Sugar* (London, 1799), p. 98.

4 The earliest extant American sugar box (Boston, c. 1678), this example by John Coney has a known English prototype in the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff. The lobate decoration on its side and lid, as well as its greater length (L. 8⅞″) and lower center of gravity (H. 4 13/16″), give evidence of its early date. *(Courtesy, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.)*

5 Italian marriage chests or *cassoni,* such as this Roman example of the mid-sixteenth century, are the ultimate source for Winslow's sugar boxes. Derived from Roman sarcophagi, their form expresses the idea that only death can dissolve a marriage. (Reproduced from Frida Schottmüller, *Furniture and Interior Decoration of the Italian Renaissance,* fig. 148.)



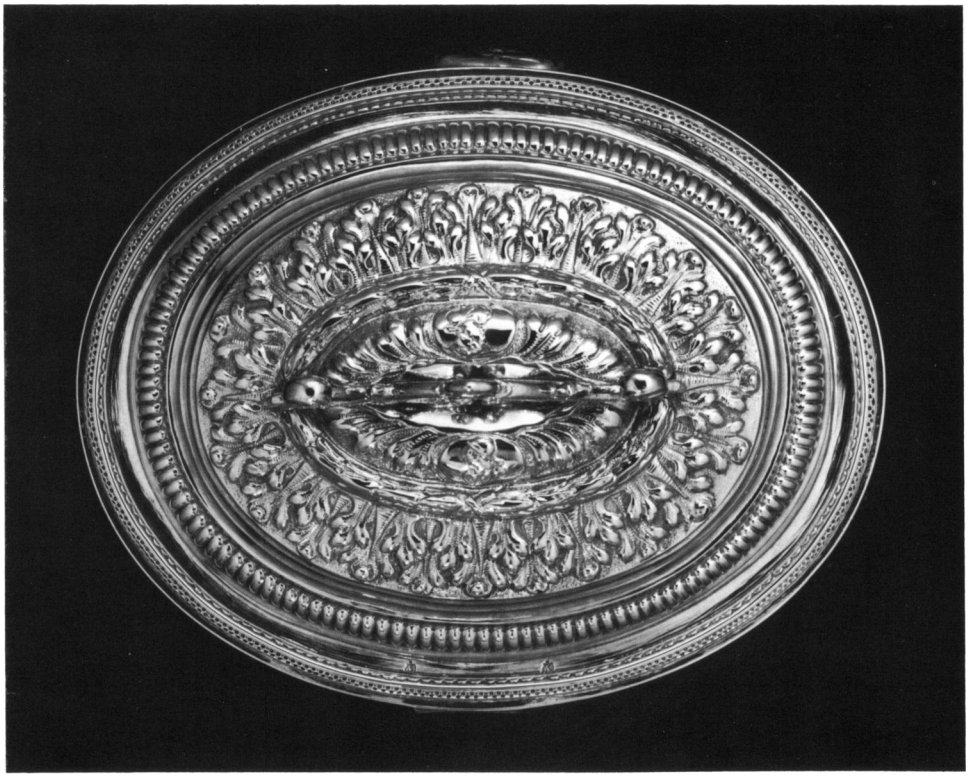
6 The foliate wreath and cupids on the cover of the Yale box, shown as Fig. 1, recall ceilings of seventeenth-century English houses and indicate Winslow may have had a knowledge of architectural design sources.

Recommended for infants, sugar was also considered a balm for strained tempers, a restorative for the sick, and a strengthener for the aged.[13] The fact that it was mixed with wine before drinking has been noted.[14] This practice may not have been solely due to taste, however, as sugar was said to reduce the heating effects of the alcohol, thought to be a cause of sweating and intoxication in the drinker.[15] Sugar, then was believed to have many

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 99, 106; also Anon., *An Essay on Sugar* (London, 1752), p. 17, quotes from a letter written in 1714. It should be noted that coffee, tea, and chocolate were also believed to have medicinal values: see Dufour and *The Natural History of Coffee, Thee, Chocolate, Tobacco,* (London, 1682). Of the three, only chocolate was considered an aphrodisiac and it was usually consumed with great quantities of sugar. Coffee, on the other hand, supposedly reduced one's reproductive powers and sexual appetites *(Natural History,* pp. 5, 16, 18).

14. John Marshall Phillips, "Winslow Sugar Box," *Bulletin of the Association in Fine Arts at Yale University,* VI, 3 (June, 1935), 43.

15. Moseley, p. 107, quotes from Slare's *Vindication of Sugar* (1715).



7 The iconography of the cover of the Winterthur box, compared with that on Yale's, suggests both were made to commemorate two different types of events. *(Courtesy, The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum.)*

non-gastronomic values. The appearance of an oval box with its sexual connotations, as the proper container for sugar not long after arguments in favor of its consumption to aid in procreation were published in 1637 seems more than a coincidence.[16]

An iconographic analysis as well as the histories of the Winslow boxes suggests that in Boston in 1702, these silver chests and their contents still retained matrimonial and sexual associations. The Ford box (Fig. 2), engraved on the bottom: *Ex dono/Sarah Middlecott/N. England/to M.M./ 1702,* was probably a wedding present from Sarah Middlecott to her daughter, Mary Middlecott, who was married in the Barbados in 1702 to

16. Before the oval shape was introduced, sugar or spice boxes (sugar originally was used as a spice for meats and sauces) were made in the form of shells. For a review of the evidence concerning the application of the term in America, see Buhler; for observations on the appearance of the form in England, see Oman, p. 107, and Banister, p. 99. The Moore box mentioned in Note 5 is an early oval example (1661).

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Othaniel Haggat.[17] Although the Garvan box (Fig. 1), which descended in the silversmith's family, is reputed to have been created by Winslow for his own use,[18] this seems unlikely. Iconographically related to the Ford example, it could have no marital associations for Winslow who wedded his first wife in 1692 and his second in 1712. Moreover, existing concepts of decorum would have made it inappropriate for a silversmith of Winslow's social status to own such an elaborate object at that point in his life. It is more likely that it was made to commemorate the marriage of some other couple, and later found its way back to the silversmith.[19]

17. In her important catalogue on colonial silver *(Colonial Silversmiths, Masters & Apprentices,* Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1956), Kathryn Buhler mistakenly implied in her entry for this piece (No. 143, p. 71) that it was a gift by Sarah Middlecott to her daughter Sarah who married Louis Boucher, a Boston merchant, in March of 1702. C. Louise Avery in her classic study *Early American Silver* (New York, 1930, 1958, 1968; p. 50) stated that the box was given to Sarah's son Edward, then resident in England.

Around 1700, Mary Middlecott, the eldest daughter of Sarah Winslow (the silversmith's aunt) and her third husband Richard Middlecott, followed her husband Henry Gibbs, to Barbados when the death of his father on the island prevented him from returning to his family in Boston. On the death of her husband, she remained in Barbados, marrying Othaniel Haggat in 1702. This information appears in "Tobias Payne Abstract," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society 1873–1875,* 411. Payne, whose grandmother was Sarah Winslow by her second husband, appears to be trustworthy since he also correctly reported the date of Sarah's marriage to Louis Boucher. The marriage of Mary Middlecott in Barbados in 1702 has until now gone unnoticed.

18. Phillips, "Winslow Sugar Box," p. 44; also, Buhler and Hood, I, 59.

19. It is possible that Winslow made this box for the other Middlecott marriage in 1702 (Sarah to Louis Boucher) and purchased it back at some later date, conceivably after Boucher's bankruptcy in 1714. By that time, Winslow was a more important figure in the community, serving as selectman in 1714 and as captain of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company in the same year.

In *The Complete Gentleman* (Ithaca, 1962 ed.; orig. London, 1634), pp. 23–24, Henry Peachman included among the prerogatives of the gentleman class the right to have

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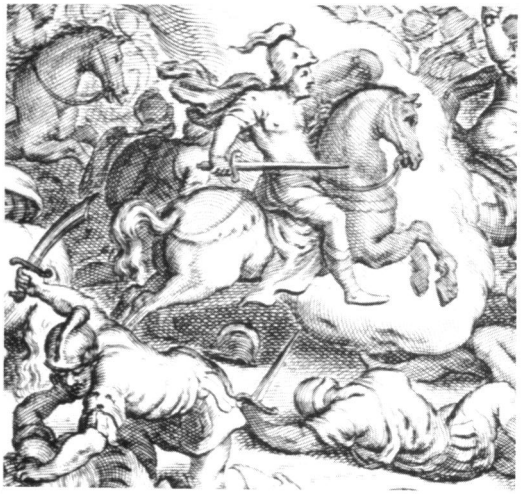

Figs. 8 and 9, details of two bosses on the Yale sugar box, show battle scenes, a popular theme in the visual and literary arts of the period. The fallen warrior and sword-wielding knight in Fig. 8 bear close resemblance to soldiers in Fig. 10, taken from an illustration in John Ogilby's *Homer His Iliads* (London, 1660; *Courtesy, Beinecke Library, Yale University)* and may be derived from it. Another engraving is probably the source for Fig. 9, which—although formerly identified as St. George slaying the dragon—depicts a horse felled by an attacking knight. Similar scenes appear on the other boxes.

On the basis of the inscription: $\overset{O}{D \cdot E}$ / *Donum W·P 1702,* it is believed that the Winterthur version (Fig. 3) was a gift from William Partridge to Daniel and Elizabeth Oliver perhaps on the occasion of the birth of their first son Daniel in June of that year.[20] Since sugar was considered good for infants as well as an aid in procreation and in strengthening the fetus in the womb, the gift of a sugar box on the birth of an heir would have been appropriate. That the events commemorated by this box were not the same as those memoralized in the Ford example is evident from the different iconography of its lid (Fig. 7).

The sides of the three boxes are ornamented with bosses displaying sword-wielding equestrian figures (Figs. 8, 9). In the Ford version, the horseman is silhouetted against a pebbled background while in the Garvan and Winterthur examples the figure is placed in a landscape setting. This non-illusionistic handling of pictorial space combined with the less plastic rendering of the fluting and the earlier type of handle suggests that the Ford box may have been made before the other two when Winslow was still experimenting with the form. Yet all of the mounted figures, similar in attitudes and dress, are obviously derived from the same source.

Martial scenes with classical figures were common in seventeenth-century paintings and prints. Winslow's designs for the bosses of his sugar boxes are akin to these chivalric representations, which often illustrate battles from epic love poems. Such poems are known to have been in contemporary Boston. Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata,* which served as the inspiration for many artists of the period, was there in an English transla-

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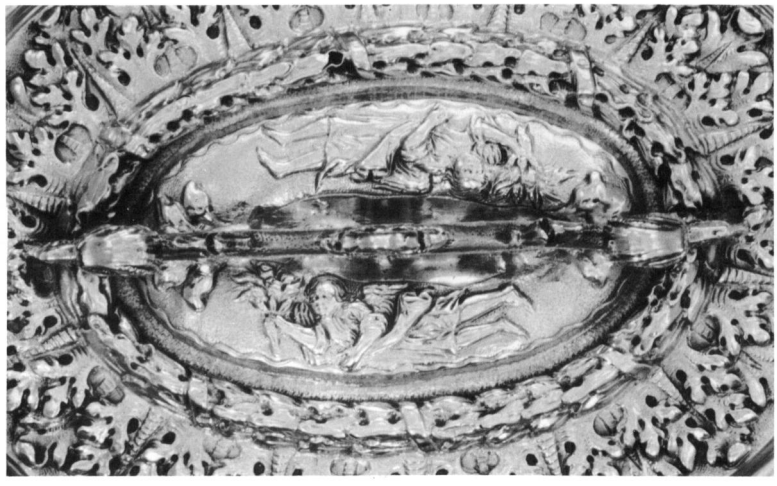
the best material things. Artists, artisans, and laborers, members of the lowest social order, were specifically excluded from enjoying these rights. The fact that Winslow sought social advancement for himself and directed his sons into mercantile and military careers rather than into goldsmithing suggests he was aware of the social hierarchy as outlined by Peacham.

20. Helen Burr Smith, "New Light on a Silver Sugar Box," *Antiques,* XLIX, 3 (March, 1946), 178.



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tion around the time the boxes were fashioned. So, too, was Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene*[21] and Homer's *Iliad,* whose heroes were considered the progenitors of knighthood.[22] Seventeenth-century editions of Homer's epic such as John Ogilby's (London, 1660)[23] often contained beautiful illustrations. A detail of one (Fig. 10) bears a remarkably close resemblance to the scene depicted on the boss from the Garvan box (Fig. 8) in which a fallen warrior with a sword in his outstretched hand lies beneath a mounted knight.

Thus, concepts of chivalry as embodied in the literature of courtly love were available in Winslow's Boston. In addition, Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier* and Peacham's *The Complete Gentleman*—which provided the intellectual and practical bases for ideas of courtly love and decorum—were also present in contemporary New England.[24] And through his membership in the Military Company of Massachusetts, Winslow could have been familiar not only with the history of knighthood and chivalry

21. Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Intellectual Life of Colonial New England* (New York, 1956), pp. 129–130, 150.

See Rensellaer W. Lee, *Ut Pictura Poesis* (New York, 1967), pp. 48–56, originally published in *The Art Bulletin,* XXII, 4 (Dec. 1940) 197–269, for a discussion of Tasso's impact on the visual arts.

22. Elias Ashmole, *The Institution, Laws & Ceremonies of the Most Noble Order of the Garter* (London, 1672), p. 6.

23. It is not known if this particular edition was in Boston in 1702, but a copy of *Homers Illyads* was listed in the library of Daniel Russell on his death in 1679 (Morison, p. 138).

24. Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier* was in the library of John Winthrop, Jr., Governor of Connecticut, who died in 1679 (Morison, p. 138). Peacham's book appeared in *A Catalogue of Curious and Valuable Books* (Boston, 1719).

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Fig. 11, a detail of the top of the Yale sugar box, shows Cupid as *Potentia amoris.* Based on the emblem in Fig. 12 from *Alciati's Emblemata* (Lyons, 1600; *Courtesy, Beinecke Library, Yale University),* Cupid holds a bunch of flowers in his right hand—symbol of Love's power over land—while his left touches a wavy line representing the sea. A copy of Alciati was sold with the contents of the library of Winslow's father-in-law in 1712.

but with manuals of war often illustrated with battle scenes of figures in classical dress.[25]

The equestrian figure on the Garvan box (Fig. 3) has been referred to as St. George slaying the dragon,[26] a designation that has been applied to the figures on the other bosses as well. This identification can be questioned not only because St. George is usually depicted carrying a spear or having just pierced the dragon, but because the fallen animal with its pronounced equine head and flowing mane can be identified as a horse.[27] Moreover, Winslow's knight carries a shield with a satyr's head; St. George's usual attribute is a shield with a cross.

The probable significance of the bearer of such a device, if not a definite identification, can be hypothesized on the basis of literary and visual evidence. In Spenser's *Faerie Queene,* Satyrane, symbol of natural virtue and champion of premarital innocence and chaste love personified by Florimell, carries a cartouche-shaped shield with a satyr's head as a device.[28] In emblematic literature, this type of shield and gorgon-headed device is associated with Pallas Athena, like Satyrane a protector of virginity.[29] Such shields admittedly occur in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century art without the bearer being a champion of virtue; but, considered in the light of other

25. Title pages of books and pamphlets on war with such illustrations are reproduced in John R. Hale's *The Art of War and Renaissance England* (Folger Booklets on Tudor and Stuart Civilization, Worlington, 1961).

26. Phillips, *American Silver,* p. 57; Buhler and Hood, I, 57. This interpretation was questioned by "H. E. K." in an article "A New England Sugar Box of 1702," *Antiques,* XXXII, 6 (Dec. 1937), 309.

27. Depictions of fallen horses in battle scenes were common in the seventeenth century; for example, in the popular engravings of Antonio Tempesta.

28. Edmund Spenser, *Faerie Queene,* III, iii, 30.

29. A. Alciati, Emblemata (Lyons, 1600), p. 104.

13 This seventeenth-century emblem, which may have inspired the handle on the Ford box, warned the viewer not "to meddle in the strife/Arising 'twixt a *Husband* and his *Wife*." *(Courtesy, Beinecke Library, Yale University.)*

evidence, their presence on these boxes suggests that Winslow's knight is a visual embodiment of chilvaric ideals.

More specific connections can be made between the iconography on the covers of the Ford and Garvan boxes (Fig. 6) and the imagery in the *Faerie Queene*. In describing the Garden of Adonis, Spenser uses images of lush vegetation and spice and metaphors of sweetness which reveal contemporary associations between sugar and love:

> There wont fayre Venus often to enjoy
> Her deare Adonis joyous company,
> And reape sweet pleasure of the wanton boy:
> There yet, some say, in secret he does ly,
> Lapped in flowers and pretious spycery,
> By her hid from the world, and from the skill
> Of Stygian gods, which doe her love envy;
> But she her selfe, when ever that she will,
> Possesseth him, and of his sweetnesse takes her fill.[30]

In this passage, Adonis' sweetness is his sexuality. He is housed, as is the sugar beneath the lids of Winslow's boxes, in a garden "lapped in flowers and pretious spycery." "Hid from the World," Adonis' sexuality, like sugar, is the sweetness which Venus can possess when she wills. It seems no accident, therefore, that sugar (a masculine word in French and German) was placed within a form sexually identified with the female.

These affinities between Spenser's imagery and Winslow's motifs provide literary evidence of a metaphorical association between sugar and love

30. Spenser, III, vi, 46.

14 Reminiscent of devices on ancient coins and Renaissance medallions, this head (one of two) on the top of the Winterthur box may represent Virtue, described by Elias Ashmole as "wearing an Helmut, but without any attire, or other ornament." *(Courtesy, The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum.)*

which would have been familiar to Boston's elite. Surely, they would also have recognized the wreath on the lids of Winslow's boxes as myrtle, Venus' plant, symbol of eternal love,[31] which grew abundantly in Spenser's garden. So, too, the twin representation on the Ford and Garvan covers of a winged figure (Fig. 11) would have been immediately identifiable not merely as cupid, "the winged boy" with whom Adonis lives in Spenser's garden paradise, but as *Potentia amoris* (Fig. 12) from Alciati's *Emblemata,* a copy of which was sold at auction in Boston in 1712 along with books from the library of Winslow's father-in-law, the Reverend Joshua Moody.[32] The emblem shows Love holding a bunch of flowers in his right hand and a fish in his left, symbolic of his power over land and sea.[33] In Winslow's

31. For a discussion of the symbolic significance of the myrtle wreath in art see Erwin Panofsky, *Studies in Iconology* (New York, 1967 ed.), p. 161. It should be noted that the wreath does not appear on the Ford example, which has a different kind of handle to be discussed below. This variation may merely be an indication of the early manufacture of the Ford piece or it could have an unknown iconographic significance.

32. *A Catologue of Rare and Valuable Books, Being the Greatest Part of the Library of the Late Reverend and Learned Mr. Joshua Moodey. . . .* (Boston, 1712), p. 25. This sale also included books from the library of Daniel Gookin and some books imported from London. There is no indication as to whom each lot belonged. The edition of Alciati sold was not earlier than the late sixteenth century since it contained the commentaries of Claudius Mimois.

33. This figure may have a dual meaning: first and foremost as cupid, but perhaps second as an administering angel carrying healing herbs. A winged, draped figure appears in one of Antonio Tempesta's illustrations for *Gerusalemme Liberata* where it brings healing herbs to cure the wounded Godfrey. Sugar, it should be remembered, was believed to have medicinal value. It should also be noted that the Ford box was literally sent across the sea as a token of love from a mother to her daughter.

I cannot explain the transformation from Alciati's nude Eros to Winslow's clothed cupid. It is possible that it can be accounted for on moral grounds, although nude cherubs do appear on New England gravestones (Sarah Nesbitt stone, Milford, Conn., 1698). In Ripa's *Iconologia,* drapery was used to differentiate divine from profane love. Two interpretations of nudity in Renaissance art are given in Panofsky's *Studies in Iconology* (p. 159) and in Edgar Wind's *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance* (New Haven, 1958). Wind identifies the clothed figure in Titian's "Sacred and Profane Love" as a representation of human love.

treatment, land is still represented by the flowers, while water is more literally depicted with a wavy line rather than symbolized by a fish.

The coiled-snake handle that caps the Ford box is a common device, and is found on the five other American sugar chests by John Coney and Daniel Greenough. This motif has been interpreted as symbolic of eternity.[34] Although such a device would be appropriate to an object with marital associations, the snake is not shown in an eternal circle—tail to mouth—but stretched out in a coil. The snake also represented prudence and wisdom in emblematic literature. In its coiled form (Fig. 13), it served, among other things, as a warning to those who would interfere in a quarrel between a man and wife,[35] a quarrel that could be stilled by the sweet object within the sugar box. The other Winslow boxes (Garvan and Winterthur) have a symmetrical foliate handle that could be yet another representation of the myrtle trees that grew in the midst of Spenser's Garden of Adonis.

On the cover of the Winterthur box, two classical heads are embossed on a raised foliate band (Fig. 14). There are no cupids. From their shape and type of representation, these motifs appear to be derived from Roman coins or Renaissance medallions.[36] As such, they may depict the abstract concept of Virtue, which Elias Ashmole, in his book on the Order of the Garter (London, 1672), described as "wearing an Helmut, but without any attire, or other ornament." The use of such a motif in conjunction with the martial scenes elsewhere on the box is eminently suitable to commemorate the birth of a male child, who, it would be hoped, would exhibit in manhood the virtues symbolized by these representations.

I have endeavored to show how Edward Winslow's sugar boxes can be understood as colonial expressions of courtly love, and how they are symbolic of marriage and fertility. Admittedly circumstantial, the visual and literary evidence is sufficiently strong to support my contention that these silver chests, in their form and decoration, reflect the contemporary belief in the amatory and reproductive properties of sugar. Literary ideas, aesthetic concepts, medical theories, and technical proficiency appear then to have combined to make these boxes three of the most significant objects produced by an early American silversmith.

34. Phillips, *American Silver*, p. 57.

35. George Wither, *A Collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne* (London, 1635), p. 247:

36. See Ashmole, p. 4, for mention of collectors of Roman coins and Peacham, pp. 125–127, on the value to be derived from collecting them. The use of such motifs as emblematic devices enjoyed a widespread popularity in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, often appearing on medallions where they represent the virtues or aspirations of a gentleman or lady. They also appear as decorative motifs in the published designs of Jean Berain and Daniel Marot.