

ART MUSEUMS *of Colonial Williamsburg*

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SILVER TEAPOT OWNED BY VIRGINIA'S LAST ROYAL GOVERNOR RETURNS TO WILLIAMSBURG



*The first example of silver marked by Andrew Fogelberg
enters the Colonial Williamsburg collection.*

WILLIAMSBURG, Va. (Sept. 17, 2018)—A small, delicately engraved, silver teapot that belonged to the Scottish nobleman John Murray (ca. 1730-1809), fourth earl of Dunmore and Virginia's last royal governor, which descended through Lord Dunmore's family, is now part of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation's collection. Engraved with the Murray family armorial crest beneath an earl's coronet, it was made in London in 1771-72 under the sponsorship of the Swedish-born silversmith Andrew Fogelberg. This gift is the first example of silver marked by Fogelberg to enter the collection.

“This remarkable teapot owned by Virginia's last royal governor represents our nation's history in a unique way that enables us to authentically tell America's enduring story,” said Mitchell B. Reiss, president and CEO of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. “Gifts such as this one permit us to better convey the human dimension of our country's history.”

Lord Dunmore, a Scottish peer initially sent to the colonies as royal governor of New York, was transferred to Virginia less than one year later as King George III's representative in the same capacity. He had a strife-filled time in Williamsburg from 1771 to 1776. Dunmore likely acquired the teapot during the earliest years of his residency in the colonies, before his family joined him from Scotland in 1774. Although there is no written documentation to prove that this teapot was used in Virginia, the likelihood that it was is quite strong. The diminutive scale of the teapot would have been suitable for Lord Dunmore's personal use while in the colonies before his family's arrival.

All semblance of peaceful governance in Virginia ended when Dunmore seized the colony's store of gunpowder in April 1775. Notoriously unpopular and sensing the danger of an armed rebellion, Dunmore took his family and some of their small valuables and fled the Governor's Palace two months later. Lady Dunmore and their children returned to Britain and Dunmore lodged on an English warship anchored in the Chesapeake Bay. In the process, he abandoned most of his household furnishings and personal property. It is believed that the Fogelberg teapot returned to Britain with the family, as it passed down among his descendants until it was given to Colonial Williamsburg recently.

"Only a handful of objects have come down to us from Lord Dunmore's time in the Governor's Palace," said Ronald L. Hurst, the Foundation's Carlisle H. Humelsine chief curator and vice president for collections, conservation, and museums. "Given his explosive role in Virginia's Revolutionary uprising, Dunmore's personal possessions are now powerful interpretive tools. This well-preserved teapot comes as a very important addition to our collections."

Diminutive in size and cylindrical in shape, the teapot is engraved with arcaded columns beneath a shell and acanthus border. The proper right side is engraved with the Murray family crest as used by the earls of Dunmore: a bearded man holding in his right hand a sword and in his left a key; above is an earl's coronet with five pearls on raised stalks interspersed with four strawberry leaves. This unique combination of elements, together with the date of the teapot, identifies it as the governor's property.

The teapot has a loose—rather than hinged—lid, perhaps indicative of the Swedish background of its silversmith/sponsor Andrew Fogelberg, as this feature is more typically found on Scandinavian, Baltic and Continental vessels. Few objects from Fogelberg's shop survive, and he is best remembered today as the master who trained the better-known English silversmith Paul Storr.

"This teapot tells a fascinating story," said Janine E. Skerry, senior curator of metals at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. "Made in the shop of a Swedish-born craftsman working in London, it was used in Virginia by a Scottish nobleman on the eve of the American Revolution. It then traveled back to Britain only to be rediscovered almost 250 years later."

The teapot is a gift of Angus Sladen of Hampshire, England, a descendent of the fourth earl of Dunmore. It descended to him via Lady Evelyn Cobbold, née Murray (1867-1963), daughter of the seventh earl of Dunmore and Lady Gertrude Coke, daughter of the second earl of Leicester. “I have a great love of and admiration for the United States,” said Sladen. “It seemed clear to me that this small object most probably witnessed part of American Revolutionary history. Colonial Williamsburg, with its great collections and knowledgeable curators and experts, seemed the ideal home for it, and I felt it might mean a great deal to visitors.”

The Dunmore teapot will be included in a multimedia exhibition focused on objects made or used in Williamsburg scheduled to open at the Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg in 2019.

Colonial Williamsburg and Art Museums tickets and additional information are available online at colonialwilliamsburg.com, by calling 855-296-6627 and by following Colonial Williamsburg on [Facebook](#) and [@colonialwmsburg](#) on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). The Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg remain open during construction of an entirely donor-funded \$41.7 million expansion.

About the Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg

The [Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg](#) include the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Museum and the DeWitt Wallace Decorative Arts Museum. The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Museum is home to the nation's premier collection of American folk art, with more than 7,000 folk art objects made during the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. The DeWitt Wallace Decorative Arts Museum exhibits the best in British and American fine and decorative arts from 1670–1840. The Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg are located at the intersection of Francis and South Henry Streets in Williamsburg, Va., and are entered through the [Public Hospital of 1773](#). Expansion of the museum broke ground on April 27, 2017. Once completed, the museums' expansion will provide a new entrance, improved public access, increased exhibition space and guest services among other enhancements. Museum hours are 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. daily.

About The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

Colonial Williamsburg operates the world's largest living history museum, preserving Virginia's 18th-century capital as a fully functioning city. Fun, engaging experiences transport guests back in time and highlight the relevance of America's founding era to contemporary life. The Colonial Williamsburg experience includes more than 500 restored or reconstructed buildings, historic trade shops, renowned museums of decorative arts and folk art, extensive educational outreach programs for students and teachers, lodging, culinary options from historic taverns to casual or elegant dining, the Golden Horseshoe Golf Club featuring 45 holes designed by Robert Trent Jones Sr. and his son Rees Jones, a full-service spa and fitness center managed by Trilogy Spa, pools, retail stores and gardens. Philanthropic support and revenue from admissions, products and hospitality operations sustain Colonial Williamsburg's educational programs and preservation initiatives.

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*Image: Teapot, 1771-1772; marked by Andrew Fogelberg, Swedish/English, working ca. 1767-deceased ca. 1815; sterling silver and wood; London, England; gift of Angus Sladen of Hampshire, England, a descendent of the fourth earl of Dunmore, 2018-128.