

LANGELOH

PORCELAIN

LAGNASCO / WALLENSTEIN

SIX TEA BOWLS AND SAUCERS FROM
THE EARLIEST ARMORIAL SERVICE
KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN
MANUFACTURED AT MEISSEN

BÖTTGER PORCELAIN
C. 1720

These six Böttger porcelain tea bowls and saucers came from a coffee and tea service that was one of the earliest Meissen armorial services known to us today. The alliance coat of arms and Funcke colours enable us to date it with confidence to around 1720. The arms are those of Pietro Roberto Taparelli, Conte di Lagnasco (1659–1732) and his (second) wife Countess Maria Josepha Antonia Carolina Waldstein or Wallenstein (1687–1735), the widowed Countess Thun-Hohenstein.



We are extremely grateful to Dr Cristina Maritano, curator of the Museo Civico Palazzo Madama in Turin, for drawing our attention to the Taparelli family and providing information on its background; and to Dr Johanna Lessmann for putting us in contact with Dr Maritano. The service can be assumed to have been a wedding gift from Augustus the Strong to his general and minister Count Lagnasco, who was close to the King and rendered him loyal service in his extensive purchases of East Asian porcelain from the Netherlands. Count Lagnasco married Countess Waldstein on 7 February 1721 in Vienna.

The Taparelli family continued to enjoy close relations with the Saxon court even after Count Lagnasco's death in 1732. From that year onwards his nephew Carlo Francesco Taparelli, Conte di Lagnasco, was royal Saxon-Polish envoy to the Holy See in Rome; around 1735 Augustus III made him a gift of a 26-piece coffee, tea and chocolate service decorated with the Taparelli arms, which is a prize example of the Italian armorial services of the later period. The service is now preserved at the Palazzo Madama in Turin, after 'crowd-funding' enabled it to be purchased by the museum from the Marouf Collection¹ (see Bonhams press release of 3.4.2013).

1 Ulrich Pietsch, *Passion for Meissen: Sammlung Said und Roswitha Marouf*, Stuttgart 2010, no. 81; and sale cat. *The Marouf Collection II*, Bonhams 02.05.2013, no. 59

At the beginning of the nineteenth century both the family services – six cups and a sugar box from the Lagnasco/Wallenstein service, and the Taparelli service presented to the nephew – were in the possession of the family Taparelli D’Azeglio (Cristina Maritano, letter of 2.11.2012). The second last owner from the family, Vittorio Emanuele Taparelli d’Azeglio di Lagnasco, was a well-known porcelain collector of the first generation and had the pieces in his collection until his death in 1890. In 1884, the year when his autobiography was published, the service stood in his London drawing room.² Vittorio Emanuele Taparelli was an important diplomat, collector and patron of the arts. From 1850 Italian ambassador in London, he developed a close relationship with the newly founded V&A and in 1862 began to build up a ceramics collection. In 1874 he donated the larger part of his collection – though not the two early Meissen services – to the Museo Civico d’arte Antica, of which he later became the director (Kuhn in sale cat. Bonhams 2013, p. 98).

In 1866 Taparelli was one of the co-founders of the the Burlington Fine Art Club, together with Sir A. Wollaston Franks, whose famous “Collection of Dresden Porcelain” was exhibited at the South Kensington and Bethnal Green museums from 1874, and John Charles Robinson, curator of the South Kensington Museum. When Taparelli exhibited his own porcelain collection at the new club in 1868 (Maritano 2011, p. 46f. and two ill.), the pieces on display will certainly have included his family’s ancient armorial porcelain. It was at the Burlington Club, five years later in 1873 (110 years after the auction sale) that the first pieces from the Clemens August chinoiserie service came to light.³ Finally, the Taparelli family’s armorial services were sold at auction in Rome by Vittorio Emanuele’s heir, Marchese Villamarina, probably in 1903.

2 Cristina Maritano, ‘Emanuele d’Azeglio, collezionista a Londra’, in *Diplomazia Musei Collezionismo tra il Piemonte e l’Europa negli anni del Risorgimento* (Turin 2011), p. 44f. and note 34

3 Thomas Iwe, ‘Das Meißener Schokoladen-, Kaffee-, und Teeservice des Kurfürsten Clemens August von Köln’, *Keramos*, 189–190/2005, p. 18

Count Lagnasco was a close associate of Augustus the Strong and played an important role in numerous diplomatic, military and dynastic missions. Although he was highly esteemed by the King and popular at the court, he was increasingly regarded as dangerous by Count Flemming, who sought to keep him away from court by having him sent on foreign missions. A good survey of his life is provided by Eduard Vehse in his account of Augustus the Strong's court:⁴

In addition to the two Germans mentioned thus far, Augustus also had two Italians amongst his cabinet ministers: Count Lagnasco and the Marquis de Fleury, both Savoyards. Flemming sought to push the former out of court, Brühl the latter. Peter Robert Taparel Comte de Lagnasco – like Friesen – was a general, statesman, diplomat and courtier in one person. He was a kind of royal favourite and kept Augustus company when the King was at his pleasures. As a general he appears in the service of Saxony as early as 1703, when he arrested the grand chancellor Beichlingen in Thorn. In 1704 he went as an envoy to Rome. Later he became Lieutenant-Captain of the Household Cavalry, which was commanded by the King himself, and titular cabinet minister. In 1708 he accompanied the King on the French campaign in Flanders, where he remained for several years as minister for the army with responsibility for certain political matters, until the war was terminated 1713 through the Peace of Utrecht, at which Lagnasco played a part with Count Werthern as second envoy of Poland-Saxony. In later years he was still employed for a number of diplomatic missions: in Rome, in The Hague, and in 1718 in Vienna, where his task was to advance the marriage between the Electoral Prince and the Habsburg Archduchess. In 1721 Lagnasco was himself married in Vienna, to the intelligent and erudite widowed Countess Thun, Dame Josephe, one of the three rich daughters and heiresses of the Emperor's Lord Chamberlain Count Karl Ernst Waldstein, who had died in 1713 and had himself married the daughter and heir of the old Count Losenstein. Countess Thun was Lagnasco's second wife. The first, a daughter of the Dutch general Count Noyelles, was a lady of considerable property who was held in high regard in all The Hague; however, she died young without issue, making Lagnasco her sole heir. Along with the houses of Countess Reuß and of the Mistress

4 Eduard Vehse, *Der Hof Augusts des Starken*, reprint from Vehse's monumental *Geschichte der deutschen Höfe seit der Reformation*, edition of 1854 (Munich n.d.), p. 195ff.

of the Royal Grand Treasury Przebendowska, Countess Lagnasco-Thun's house was one of the Dresden houses most frequented by visitors from abroad, because one always met members of society there. Finally, Lagnasco was envoy in Vienna and died in 1732 while on the road between Vienna and Poland.

In addition to the information provided by Vehse the following should be noted. Count Lagnasco was born in Piedmont in 1659 and was first active at the court of Turin before moving to Dresden, where he won the confidence of Augustus the Strong, like numerous other foreigners whom the King esteemed highly enough to entrust them with court offices.

His first mission in Rome was to convince the Pope of Augustus the Strong's resolve to have his son (the later Augustus III) convert to the Catholic faith.⁵ In The Hague his initial task was to make up for Augustus's loss of the Polish crown at the Peace of Altranstädt of 1706 by seeking an alternative royal crown for him (Naples). Lagnasco then proceeded to Poltava in order to negotiate the treaty of 1709, which resulted in Augustus the Strong being able to return to Poland at the head of his armies – untroubled by the maritime powers – and take the throne once more.

In 1713 Lagnasco was appointed Cabinet Minister and 'Real' (active) Privy Councillor. In the 'year of the Orders' 1713/14 Augustus the Strong awarded him the Order of the White Eagle, a high and exclusive distinction accorded to only a small number of favoured personages including Tsarina Anna and Frederick the Great. As is shown by the Royal Court and State Calendar of the Electorate of Saxony, the bearers of the Order played a prominent role at court, occupying the first rank of precedence (Vehse, p. 260).

It goes without saying that the Order had to be one of the elements adorning the Taparelli coat of arms on the wedding service. He had very possibly met his second wife in Vienna in 1718/19 when he was seeking a bride for the Electoral Prince. Between 1728 and 1734 the imperial privy councillor Count Leopold Wilhelm von Waldstein was Steward at the court of Electoral Princess Maria Josepha, acting at the same time as imperial ambassador to the Saxon-Polish court.

5 Harald Marx, *Die Gemälde des Louis de Silvestres*, Staatliche Kunstsammlung Dresden 1975, p. 170

In the large state portrait of Lagnasco executed in 1724 by the court painter Louis de Silvestre,⁶ the eye of the beholder is deliberately guided towards the Order of the White Eagle and the painting unmistakably conveys its bearer's pride in this special distinction. The partner portrait in the same format and by the same painter entitled 'Mad. la Comtesse Lagnasco' likewise entered the royal collection at the beginning of 1725 (Marx 1975, p. 176); however, it no longer hangs in Dresden, nor is a copy or illustration of it known. In the exhibition catalogue *Unter einer Krone* (1997, p. 174, no. 228), Bettina Gockel points out that the background motif in the Count's portrait alludes to Lagnasco's military achievements in the campaign against the confederates in Cracow in 1715; furthermore, it should be noted, it also hints at his being a connoisseur of Asian porcelain and European faience.

The Gemäldegalerie in Dresden possesses a second portrait of Lagnasco that was painted in 1730 by Marie de Silvestre, daughter of the court painter, which also emphasizes the Order of the White Eagle on the blue sash and shows the Order's eight-rayed silver star next to the cross, with the inscription 'Pro fide lege et rege!' ('For the Faith, Law, and the King').



Count Lagnasco by Louis de Silvestre,
Staatliche Kunstsammlung Dresden,
inv. no. 3960

6 SKD Galerie Alte Meister, gallery number 3960; Marx 1975, no. 45; exh. cat. *Unter einer Krone* (Leipzig 1997), no. 228

LAGNASCO AND PORCELAIN

Lagnasco's closeness to Augustus the Strong did not derive solely from his high offices at court and various diplomatic missions: he also shared his master's passion for porcelain. Marx's book on Silvestre (1975, see above) provides a short survey of Lagnasco's life, which includes the following passage:

After the death of his first wife, a Marquise de Noyelles, he undertook a journey to Holland in the years 1716–1718, during which he not only put matters concerning his inheritance into order but also purchased faience and Asian porcelain for King Augustus II. An account of these purchases and his associated endeavours is given by Friedrich Reichel in his doctoral thesis 'Die Chinoiserie in Sachsen', p. 53, note 315.

Similarly, the relevant file (Loc 380) contains both official and diplomatic documents and also extensive reports by Lagnasco about the porcelain purchases for and answers from Augustus the Strong. Reichel⁷ dedicates a special section entirely to the subject '*The journey of Count Lagnasco to Holland*'. However not only faience and Asian porcelain but also Meissen wares created a special bond between the King and his minister, as is shown by other matters than the porcelain service with the alliance coat of arms that was to be his wedding gift. In Steinbrück's '*Report on the Meissen porcelain manufactory from the beginnings until 1717*',⁸ it is expressly stated in Chapter XI §6 that Lagnasco was accorded the great honour of being invited to visit the Manufactory together with the King:

The same persons then inspected the newly founded manufactory that His Majesty had had installed in the castle at Meissen, and most graciously declared that they were very pleased with what they saw there. The first time that this happened was on the feast of the Epiphany in 1711, the second on 11 July 1712, and the third on 21 April 1714. As a memento of the visits His Majesty wrote his great name in a book with his own hand, as did the gentlemen accompanying him, namely, old Prince Radziwil and Count von Lagnasco.

7 Friedrich Reichel, 'Die Chinoiserie in Sachsen', doctoral thesis, Dresden, 1971, pp. 53–56

8 Ingeborg Menzhausen, *Transkription von Johann Melchior Steinbrücks Bericht über die Porzellanmanufaktur Meissen von den Anfängen bis zum Jahre 1717* (Gütersloh 1982), pp. 102–103

The biography by Klaus Hoffmann has the following to say about the visit on 21 April 1714:⁹

The guest-book recording important visits to the Meissen porcelain manufactory begins with an entry concerning 21 April 1714. On his way to the Leipzig Easter Fair, Augustus the Strong stopped off at Albrechtsburg Castle with 'Polish magnates and gentlemen of the Saxon court' and was served an opulent breakfast in the grand hall. In honour of the exalted guest, Böttger had had a Willkomm jug made: a huge drinking bowl with applied vine-leaf decoration to a model by Irmingier. Everyone present drained the Willkomm jug to the lees. Those who went about the task too hastily or did not take care made themselves the butt of laughter, because the rim was perforated with fine holes through which the wine squirted out over their faces and clothing: it was a drinking joke. The King wrote his name – Augustus Rex – in the guest-book proffered by Böttger, splattering ink from the plume as he did so. In addition he wrote the name and title of Prince Radziwill, Grand Chancellor of Lithuania, who for some unknown reason did not take the pen up himself. The others signed for themselves: Roberto de Lagnasco, Count Vitzthum von Eckstädt, Georg von Holtzbrinck and finally Böttger himself ...



Drinking vessel in the form of a key
Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg

9 Klaus Hoffmann, *Johann Friedrich Böttger* (Berlin 1985), p. 481

Inspector Steinbrück's weekly report dated 1 November 1721 gives a further express account of the King visiting the manufactory with Count Lagnasco, Count Watzdorf and others in his entourage.

Another indication of his closeness to the King is the fact that Lagnasco is one of the few persons to be mentioned by name in the first inventory of the royal collection of 1721, in Chapter I, because the King had received four Preisler-tankards from him (according to Maureen Cassidy-Geiger a gift,¹⁰ and according to Zimmermann a purchase¹¹). There the following archival record is quoted:¹²

In the year 1722 in the month of June His Royal Majesty received the following from Count Lagnasco and put it in the palace:

N.64. 2 small tankards decorated with Dutch landscapes and enamelled in red and black, with gilded handles, 4 [Saxon] inches tall and 3 1/2 inches in diam.

N.65. 2 of the same with aquatic shooting scenes enamelled in Schwarzlot, the same size.

Pazaurek (1925, as above) considers that the intention behind Lagnasco's 'gift' was to stimulate the Schwarzlot and iron-red painting that at this point was at a low ebb at Meissen.

10 Maureen Cassidy-Geiger, *The Arnhold Collection of Meissen Porcelain 1710–50* (New York 2008), p. 557, n. 1

11 Quoted from Gustav Pazaurek, *Deutsche Fayence- und Porzellan-Hausmaler* (Leipzig 1925), vol. 1, p. 22, n. 2; the tankards with the Johanneum numbers 64 and 65 are illustrated in Pazaurek, vol. 1, figs. 381 and 384

12 Ingeborg Menzhausen, *Böttgersteinzeug Böttgerporzellan* (Dresden 1969), p. 40

DATING

The service to which the present six tea bowls and saucers belong is the oldest Meissen armorial service known today. It can be dated with considerable certainty.

- The first indicator is naturally the alliance coat of arms and the fact that Lagnasco married Countess Thun-Hohenstein, née Countess Wallenstein, on 7 February 1721.



Given that it was presumably not possible to purchase a service of this kind on the open market in this early period, it must have a gift from Augustus the Strong, who will have chosen it in recognition of Lagnasco's fondness for porcelain. This would suggest that the service was finished towards the end of the year 1720, to leave a few months until the wedding for the transport to Vienna. At this point in time the wedding

had on several occasions been the subject of court correspondence¹³ between the mighty Flemming and the Saxon court's long-standing envoy to Vienna, Field Marshall General Count Wackerbarth. The three letters written to Flemming in Warsaw by Wackerbarth in Dresden at the end of 1720/beginning of 1721 were concerned with the bride's great wealth and Bohemian estates, Lagnasco's financial assets, and the imperial order concerning the regulation of associated matters.

- The colours and painting on the tea bowls are typical of George Funcke.¹⁴ The paintings on the teapot (fig. 162)¹⁵ illustrated by Boltz are indeed very similar to the Taparelli ones. In the Arnhold Catalogue (2008, p. 288) Maureen Cassidy-Geiger points out that the small elements of floral decoration inside the bowls can be regarded as a veritable Funcke hallmark. Funcke's personal style is well attested (Boltz 2000, see above), as he was the only decorator in overglaze enamels to have worked for the manufactory during the Böttger period. Like Höroldt later, he was an independent entrepreneur, and worked for the manufactory under instructions from Böttger and later Höroldt. Like Höroldt he is thus not considered to be a Hausmaler.

The bowls are decorated in typical Funcke colours the first uses of which are clearly datable according to Boltz (2000, p. 143): the black and iron-red were not developed until 1718, which would also fit in well with the dating of the Lagnasco service to around 1720.

13 Privy Council, loc. 713/4 correspondence Flemming–Wackerbarth 1720–1721:
– fols. 70r–71v: Letter from W to F. 28.12.1720 from Dresden to Warsaw, written in W's own hand:
– fols. 81r–84r: W to F 4.1.21, in W's hand, Dresden
– fols. 87r–88v: W to F. 18.1.21 to Warsaw

14 Claus Boltz, 'Steinzeug und Porzellan der Böttgerperiode', *Keramos 167–168/2000*, figs. 103 and 162; Rainer Rückert, *Biografische Daten der Meißener Manufakturisten des 18. Jhdts.* (Munich 1990), p. 147

15 = Arnhold Collection, cat. no. 112

WHY NOT HÖROLDT?

As the service can be assumed to have been decorated shortly before the wedding and not taken from store, it is worthy of note that it was not decorated by Höroldt, who did after all start work as a painter at Meissen on 3 June 1720 and completed his first overglaze enamel service (a *déjeuner*) on 19 July 1720. Thereupon he travelled to Dresden, not only to present it but also *‘in order to draw ... the royal coat of arms and the cross and sash of the Order [meaning the Polish Order of the White Eagle!] and then to paint it onto the porcelain here’*.¹⁶



Floral decoration typical of Funcke on the tea bowls



16 Rückert 1990, bottom of p. 158; Otto Walcha, 'Höroldts erstes Arbeitsjahr in Meissen', *Keramikfreunde der Schweiz* 47/1959, pp. 28 – 31

This means that even after only a few weeks Höroldt was active in the relevant fields of service and armorial painting. In spite of the additional fact that in 1720 and also in 1721 Funcke received considerably higher fees from the manufactory than Höroldt – Funcke 1246 thalers incl. gold / Höroldt 718 thalers (Rückert 1990, p. 147) – the commission was given to Funcke to execute. By far the largest single payment made to Funcke was 145 thalers in January 1721, which could well have included payment for the present armorial service. This would make it one of the last services to be painted by Funcke, as Höroldt's increased activity and the positively meteoric expansion of his sub-enterprise brought Funcke's commissions for painting in colours to a halt – unlike his commissions to execute decoration in gold, for which the manufactory, and in particular Höroldt, was dependent upon him until 1725/26.

THE EARLIEST KNOWN ARMORIAL SERVICE FROM THE MEISSEN MANUFACTORY

Until well into the 1980s the earliest Meissen armorial service was considered to be the one of which Augustus the Strong made a gift to Victor Amadeus of Savoy (later King Victor Amadeus II) in 1725.¹⁷ Even the complete listing of the royal gifts in the Appendix to *Fragile Diplomacy*¹⁸ features no armorial service of an earlier date.

However, there do exist three pieces in early Böttger porcelain decorated with the arms of Electress Sophie of Hanover and the alliance coat of arms of the Margrave of Baden ('Türkenlouis') and Franziska Sybilla Augusta of Sachsen-Lauenburg. Electress Sophie of Hanover died on 7 June 1714, after which date her coat of arms cannot have been used.

According to the present state of research it is certain that these porcelain pieces were not decorated at the manufactory. Böttger was not capable of such decoration (not even as the happy outcome of some kind of experiment, as the Lübeck catalogue speculates), nor did he have a single decorator who was versed in the art of enamelling. Orders of this kind could therefore not be executed at the manufactory but, rather, were entrusted – as was done later with Höroldt and his workshop – to George Funcke, who was under contract to the manufactory and had painted for the Meissen manufactory from as early as 13 May 1713 (i.e., from the very beginning of porcelain manufacture at Meissen), initially with cold colours and from 1717 in fired enamels (Boltz 2000, p. 138). The colours of black and iron-red that appear on the three pieces of armorial porcelain were, as has been mentioned, only developed by Funcke in 1718. Sebastian Kuhn¹⁹ seeks to find a way out of this conundrum by suggesting that the decoration was done by the Hausmaler David Conrad Meerheim. There is, however, no archival evidence for this assumption, nor is it tenable given the fact that porcelain production only began during the year 1713 and there is no evidence of off-premises painting on Böttger porcelain from the earliest period. The accusations and charges that Meerheim was doing this kind of thing do not in fact begin until the

17 T. H. Clarke, 'Böttger-Wappenporzellan', *Keramos*, 95/1982, p. 21; Paul Schnyder von Wartensee, 'Meissner Wappenservice des 18. Jahrhunderts', *Keramikfreunde der Schweiz*, 50/1960, p. 44

18 Maureen Cassidy-Geiger, *Fragile Diplomacy: Meissen Porcelain for European Courts* (Yale 2008), p. 323

19 Hoffmeister sale cat. III, 24.11.2010, no. 63

1720s. In addition, the statement quoted by Kuhn to the effect that Meerheim boasted of having painted ‘a number of grand gentlemen’s arms’ is first found in a sixteen-page letter of 14 November 1722.²⁰ Even Busson,²¹ when considering the question of the unknown painter in enamels, wondered why Böttger, who was in urgent need of such painters, did not take advantage of the existence of an enameller whose abilities were clearly superior to those of Funcke. Had he done so, the Böttger period would have taken an entirely different and more brilliant course.

Augustus the Strong, the Electress of Hanover (*Fragile Diplomacy*, p. 195ff.), and the Margravine²² were closely related and also shared close bonds of friendship. It is hardly conceivable that such a very personal porcelain gift would have been executed by a Hausmaler or a Meissen painter doing work off the factory premises, or that in 1713/1714 families on such friendly terms with Augustus the Strong would have gone behind his back by ordering armorial decoration from a Hausmaler. Quite apart from these factors, it is very difficult to imagine how at this extremely early point in time it would have been possible to make up complete services in white porcelain.

Be that as it may, the fact remains that at the present time the Lagnasco/Wallenstein service is the earliest armorial service known for certain to have been manufactured and decorated at Meissen.

20 Richard Seyffahrt, *Johann Gregorius Höroldt* (Dresden 1981), p. 27

21 Arnold Busson, ‘Ein unbekanntes, in frühen Emailfarben bemaltes Hauptwerk aus Böttger-Porzellan’, *Keramos*, 128/1990, p. 10

22 Ulrike Grimm, ‘Frühe Meissen-Porzellane der Markgräfin Sybilla Augusta im Schloß Favorite’, *Weltkunst*, 17 (September 1996), pp. 1858–61

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