

# THE GADROON

Newsletter of the South Carolina Silver Society, Inc.

FALL 2018

## ANNUAL DINNER PLANNED FOR FEBRUARY 8th

Mark your calendars now for the South Carolina Silver Society's Annual Dinner scheduled for Friday evening, February 8, 2019. As customary, the dinner will be held in Columbia at the Palmetto Club. The evening's speaker will be Hampton Smith, SCSS's first MESDA scholar who did research on a John Ewan pitcher. Additional details and registration forms will be sent to members in early January.

## SCSS HOLDS FALL PROGRAM ON HARTSVILLE SILVER

By Judy Anderson

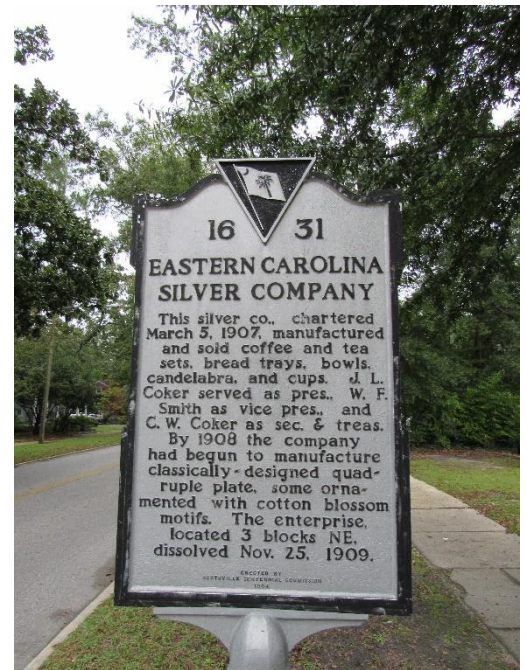
On Saturday, October 27, members of the SCSS traveled to Hartsville, South Carolina, to visit the Hartsville Museum to see its permanent collection of pieces made by the Eastern Carolina Silver Company. ECSC was in existence in Hartsville from 1907 to 1909 where it manufactured quadruple-plated hollowware made with a copper alloy base that was then electroplated with silver. Each piece was stamped on the bottom by a steel marker with the image of a small palmetto tree and the name of the company: E. Carolina Silver Co., Hartsville, S.C. The company manufactured and sold coffee and tea sets, trays, bowls, candelabra, cups, and other decorative items such as powder puff boxes. Favorite motifs were cotton bolls, water lilies, roses, and other southern flowers as well as grapes. When the company dissolved in 1909 more than 5,000 pieces were sent to auction in Chicago.

An Eastern Carolina creamer and under plate was sold by Charlton Hall in 2008. The set brought \$70.00

The Director of the Museum, Kathy M. Dunlap, served as tour guide and answered our many, many questions. While the exhibit is small, it is certainly worth the trip to see it and makes a great day trip!

Several of us ate at one of the local restaurants - yummy!! Since Frank White grew up in nearby Chesterfield, he was able to "fill us in" on local history and sights.

All in all, it was a delightful day. I would hope that our members would make an opportunity to view this collection since it is definitely part of our state's connection with silver.





## SOUTH CAROLINA SILVER SOLD IN RECENT AUCTION

Auctions at Brunk's in Asheville recently featured several pieces of South Carolina silver. At its sale on September 14, 2018, a coin silver julep cup with marks for W. Carrington & Co. sold for \$960 against an estimate of \$200-\$200. William Carrington worked in both New York and was working in Charleston in the 1830's.

The same sale featured six coin silver forks by John Ewan. When the hammer fell, the downturned fiddle-handled forks monogrammed "Mikell," brought \$1,080 against an estimate of \$300-\$500.

## SCSS MEMBER "DISCOVERS" OLD SOUTH CAROLINA SILVER AT HISTORIC NORTH CAROLINA CHURCH

By Frank White

During last Labor Day weekend in an attempt to escape a little of Columbia's heat and humidity, my wife and I escaped for a few days to the mountains of Flat Rock, North Carolina. On Sunday we attended St. John in the Wilderness Episcopal Church. We had been to St. John several times before, and I was always intrigued by the church's communion silver. I knew the original church was built as a private chapel in 1833 on the grounds of Charles and Susan Heyward Barings' mountain home. Susan Baring was from Charleston and was heiress to a fortune made in rice. I also knew that so many from the South Carolina Low Country had summer homes in Flat Rock that it was known as "Little Charleston in the Mountains." All around the church are tablets and stones inscribed with names familiar to anyone knowing very much about Charleston's history: Drayton, Rutledge, Middleton, Rhett, Smythe, Pinckney, and so on. A stroll through the churchyard shows many well-known members of southern aristocracy had plots in the churchyard, including Christopher Memminger, a Charlestonian who was the first secretary of the Confederate treasury; The Rev'd. John Drayton, developer of the Magnolia Gardens and many others.

With all these Charleston connections, I wondered if there was a possibility the communion silver could have been made there. After the



service, I approached someone and asked about the silver. About all he could tell me was that it was very old and once had been stolen, but fortunately was found and returned. He suggested I contact someone in the church office.

An email to the church administrator put me in touch with John Barker, a Furman professor who also is the church archivist, who confirmed my suspicions.

Consisting of a chalice, an intinction cup, two cruets, a paten, a dish, a lavabo bowl, and a reserve host container, the silver was clearly marked as having been made by John Ewan, well-known 19<sup>th</sup> century Charleston silversmith.

I suggest the SCSS plan a road trip to Flat Rock to see this silver firsthand.

## **TIFFANY & CO. CREATES NEW ITEMS**

Iconic Tiffany & Co. recently announced that its “artisans are transforming utilitarian items into works of art.” An example is its newly-advertised set of sterling silver and American walnut chopsticks. The set includes a sterling rest highlighted with Tiffany blue enamel and retails for \$525.

Among other “transformed” items are a silver and walnut ice cream scoop (\$425) Tiffany describes as a “household essential reimaged in sterling silver and American walnut” and a walnut and silver sugar shovel (\$150).

Could these be Christmas presents for someone who has everything??

## **THANKSGIVING BRINGS OUT STUFFING SPOONS**

With Thanksgiving approaching, many will be bringing out their stuffing spoons. Thanksgiving as celebrated today comes from around the time of the Civil War and was promoted as a means to help boost the Plymouth Colony over the early Virginia settlements and to diminish Pocahontas as a national maternal figure in favor of the Pilgrim Fathers. History shows that a thanksgiving celebration was held in Virginia in 1607, some fourteen years before the Plymouth celebration. On October 3, 1863, President Lincoln proclaimed a

national Day of Thanksgiving and Prayer to be celebrated in November.

Many Scots settled in the eastern part of colonial Virginia without a doubt bringing with them the long silver spoons so often referred to as stuffing (or rice, if from the South) spoons; however, these spoons were most probably used for haggis, the Scottish dish made from sheep or calf offal mixed with suet, oatmeal, and seasonings boiled in the animal’s stomach. As the Scottish haggis gave way to more what we today think of as the traditional American stuffing and dressing, the spoons found other uses.

A good source for more information is Ann Abrams’ book, *The Pilgrims and Pocahontas: Rival Myths of American Origin*, published by Westbury Press in 1999.

Whether you will be using your long-handled spoon for haggis, stuffing or rice, the officers of the SCSS take this opportunity to wish all members a very happy Thanksgiving.

## **NEWS FROM SCSS**

1. Members of the fundraising committee will be soon contacted about meeting. The main topic will be on plans to conduct a raffle to raise money for the society’s scholarship fund.

2. The treasurer reminds members that she will be sending notices of dues for 2019 in early December.

## **SCSS MEMBERS ASKED TO SUBMIT IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS**

Members are asked to continue to submit ideas for articles or other information that could be included in future issues of *The Gadroon* to Frank White at [frankwhite@bellsouth.net](mailto:frankwhite@bellsouth.net).

## **SOUTH CAROLINA SILVER SOCIETY**

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