

**Lot 722. Antique tall case clock, with silver and ormolu dial and Cambridge chimes, by John Webb, Ubley, in English marqueterie case surmounted by carved Royal Coat of Arms.**



Image: from the priced 1947 sale catalogue published by J.E. Pritchard. TD3428 Bristol Museums, Galleries, and Archives.

**Where is the clock now?**

The clock was purchased in the 1947 sale for £130 by Thomas Cottrell-Dormer of Rousham House.

**More about the clock.**

In August 1947 Thomas Cottrell-Dormer responded to an article in Country Life magazine about carved crestings on clocks as follows:

“Sir, in your issue of June 27 you illustrated a tall-case clock surmounted by a carved cresting bearing the arms of William III and asked for information about other clocks with similar crestings. I enclose a photograph of a clock which I purchased at the recent Ashton Court sale near Bristol. The works are by John Webb of Ubley, a Somerset village south of Bristol, but the marquetry case is as good as the finest London work of 1680-90.

The cresting, as the detail photograph shows, has the Royal arms enclosed within the garter with supporters and crown.

The garter motto reads: “*Honi soit qui mal y pins,*” and the royal motto below “*Dieu et mon droet.*” Possibly the mis-spelling points to a provincial carver.

The clock presumably belonged to Sir Hugh Smyth, Bt., a Knight of the Bath (died 1680), or his son, Sir John Smyth (died 1726). It has a rather primitive Cambridge chime struck on bars.”

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DETAIL OF CRESTING, CARVED WITH THE ROYAL ARMS, ON THE HOOD OF TALL-CASE CLOCK (left) WITH FLORAL MARQUETRY (circa 1690)

The motto, when spelt correctly translates as: "May he be shamed who thinks badly of it" and "God and my right".

Crest image and text courtesy of the British Newspaper Archive.