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Searches have been carried out in the official registers of arms and pedigrees to try to identify the crest on your silver platter which you say was made by Edward Barnard of Hatton Garden circa 1915, and I write to report the results.

The crest may be blazoned **Out of a coronet a dexter arm in armour embowed holding in the hand a battle-axe**. The tinctures cannot be determined from the engraving. The coronet is a crest coronet, sometimes termed a ducal coronet. Confusingly, it is not a coronet of rank but a decorative device used in place of a crest wreath.

A crest in this design is on record for only one family. At the Heralds' Visitation of Sussex made in 1634, the crest **Out of a coronet Gules a dexter arm in armour embowed Argent garnished Or holding in the hand proper a battle-axe Or** was allowed to William Fowle of Riverhall [in the parish of Wadhurst], with the arms **Gules a lion passant guardant between three roses Or** (Coll Arm ms C27, fol. 133v).

An almost identical crest, but with the hand in a steel gauntlet, was granted by patent of Sir William le Neve, Norroy King of Arms, dated 5 June 1635, to Sir Lionel Maddison of Newcastle upon Tyne, blazoned **An armed arm with a gauntlet proper garnished gold issuing out of a crown flory and holding a battle-axe proper charged with a cross Gules the staff thereof Sable**. By the same patent Sir Lionel was confirmed the paternal arms **Argent two battle-axes in saltire Sable** (Coll Arm ms Grants 2, fol. 608).

As you may know, individuals wanting to display armorial bearings have long assumed without authority arms and crest which properly belong to other families of the same surname. Occasionally people have adopted arms and crests of their own devising. Such unofficial usage can be found in *Fairbairn's Book of Crests of the Families of Great Britain and Ireland* (1905), a published work of reference used by jewellers and engravers. The crest on your silver is given for Fowle and for a family named Place of Dinsdale in Durham and Weddington Hall in Warwickshire, blazoned **Out of a ducal coronet Or a dexter arm in armour embowed holding in the hand a battle-axe all proper**. Pedigrees of the Place family are on record here, but without a crest. For example, the pedigree of Rowland Place of Dinsdale was entered at the Heralds' Durham Visitation of 1666 with the arms **Per pale Or and Gules a lion passant guardant counterchanged** (Coll Arm C41, fol. 25v). A similar crest, but with the hand in a gauntlet, is listed for Cove of Herefordshire and blazoned **Out of a ducal coronet Or a dexter arm in armour embowed holding in the gauntlet a battle-axe proper**.

In conclusion, I can say that the crest on your silver might have been engraved for a person named Fowle or Place. It is conceivable that it was engraved for someone named Maddison or Cove, but their crests were slightly different. Unless the piece provides other clues, such as initials, it is impossible for me to make a firm attribution.

Yours sincerely,

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