

Building the Collection

*A celebration of the work of
Douglas Sweet for the Glove Collection Trust*



**Douglas Sweet
(1939 - 2015)**

ulputate sed non mauris. Morbi vestibulum
sollicitudin ipsum non malesuada. Etiam
tortor massa, eleifend vel augue non,
finibus pharetra odio. Integer vel
malesuada eros. ssa, eleifend vel augue
non, finibus pharetra odio. Integer
vel malesuada eros.

Building the Collection

A special selection of twenty single gloves, pairs of gloves and groups of gloves from the Collection, chosen as a fit and lasting tribute to Past Assistant Douglas Sweet.

For many years Douglas Sweet worked tirelessly, with boundless enthusiasm and unstinting generosity to acquire gloves to add to the Glove Collection Trust Collection, and always with his characteristic charm and courtesy.

These featured twenty treasures from the Collection are chosen with affection and gratitude, in Douglas's memory. Taken together they tell the story of Douglas Sweet - an extraordinary man - and his work to build an outstanding collection of historical and fashionable gloves.



The Festival of Britain Gloves

1951



This is the first pair of gloves in the Glove Collection Trust Accession Book; formally, therefore, this is Douglas's first acquisition for the Glove Collection Trust Collection. The doeskin gloves were made for exhibition at The Festival of Britain in 1951.

The gloves were produced by Ensor & Southcombe Ltd, Tintinhull, Yeovil, Somerset, with the doeskin produced at Southcombe & Sons and the silk screen design implemented by S B Southcombe at Thos. Ensor, Milbourne Port near Sherborne, Dorset.

Gift of Southcombe Brothers Ltd

The Dents Clasp Gloves



ca. 1905



Douglas Sweet joined the Worshipful Company of Glovers of London in 1976 and remained a Liveryman for the rest of his life.

He was passionate and knowledgeable about gloves and their history and loved to share his enthusiasms with everyone he met.

These satin-covered stiffened gauntlet gloves from the beginning of the 20th century, possibly worn for motoring, were one of Douglas's great historical finds. The gloves incorporate a special clasp, patented by Dents, one of the UK's oldest glove manufacturers.

Purchase at auction: Kerry Taylor Auctions in association with Sotheby's, 30 October 2007; gift of Past Assistant Douglas Sweet

The Duke of Edinburgh's Carriage-Driving Gloves

1997



The idea of finding gloves with a known wearer was important to Douglas. He was particularly keen to acquire gloves with a Royal provenance for the Collection.

He was pleased therefore to procure a pair of the Duke of Edinburgh's driving gloves for the Collection, noting especially that the rather worn condition was part of the importance of the gloves.



Gift of Liveryman Les Winfield



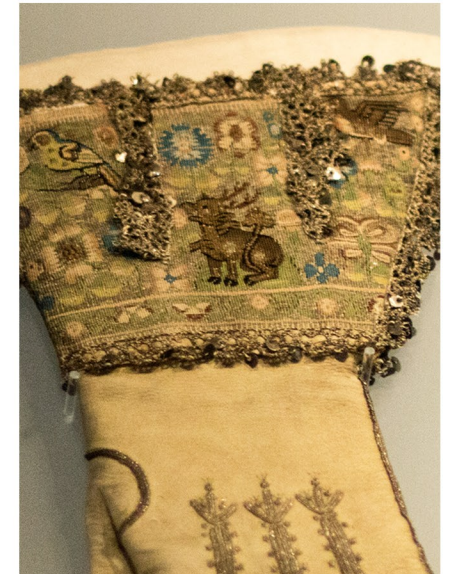
The Honywood Family Gloves

1620s

Douglas loved nothing better than finding gloves with a history.

This canvas-worked pair of tabbed gauntlet gloves from the 1620s with a design of stags, dogs, robins and colourful flowers was a key find at auction. Best of all, the gloves had been in the same family for over 350 years. The original owner was Sir Robert Honywood (1601-1686) of Charing, Kent and Marks Hall, near Colchester, Essex.

They are now on display at the Fashion Museum in Bath.



Purchase at auction:

Bonham's, Shipton-on-Cherwell, Oxfordshire, 6 May 2014

The Knitted Ecclesiastical Gloves

1600s

Douglas was always on the lookout for historical gloves to add to the Glove Collection Trust Collection.

He acquired these fine knitted silk and metal thread gloves from the 1600s, thought to be Italian and for ecclesiastical use.

He took the gloves to Bath, to sit alongside the Spence and Harborow Collections of rare and early gloves owned by the Glove Collection Trust, which have been on loan to the Fashion Museum since the mid-1980s.



The Museum's role is to help the Glove Collection Trust fulfil its charitable purpose of making the gloves in its Collection accessible to a wide audience. The Fashion Museum does this by including the gloves in exhibitions and displays, facilitating loans to other museums and ensuring that anyone can view them in the Study Facilities.



The Missing Glove

1620s

The Spence Collection is the finest collection of 17th century gloves in the world.

It was formed by artist Robert Spence (1871-1964) and donated to the Worshipful Company of Glovers of London in 1959.

There are a number of single gloves in the Spence Collection and Douglas was immensely excited when, during a visit to the Museum of Leather in Northampton, he discovered the missing glove to one of the collections single gloves.

He negotiated behind the scenes, for many months, and used his gentle persuasive skills to encourage the Museum of Leather to donate the single glove to the Glove Collection Trust. The two single gloves are now re-united as a pair at the Fashion Museum in Bath.



Purchase at auction: Christie's South Kensington, 4 December 2007

Gift of the Museum of Leather, Northampton

The Glove That's Been To Space

1986

Douglas relished pin-pointing facts; and correcting an attribution for this glove was one of his key discoveries.

It is the left hand glove from a pressurized space suit worn and signed by Russian cosmonaut Colonel Aleksandr Volkov who flew a number of space missions in the mid-1980s.

It was originally listed in the auction catalogue as the glove of one of the original cosmonauts in 1964. Douglas, however, discovered that this could not be possible, as Volkov was only 16 years old then!



Purchase at auction: Christies South Kensington, 17 May 2007

The Duplicate Coronation Glove

1953

Douglas enjoyed announcing his latest find to his fellow Trustees, and in April 2011 he had exciting news to impart.

For many years historic gloves that had been donated to the Company were on loan to the Museum of London.

In April 2011 a duplicate Coronation glove, made for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Coronation in June 1953, was found during a collection review exercise at the Museum of London.

It was a great day when it was returned, joining the original Coronation Glove which is part of the Harborow Collection.



Gift of Messrs Harborow

The Daily Telegraph Appeal Gloves

1938

These salmon pink rayon gauntlet gloves, worn by Mrs Price on her wedding day in 1935, was one of the pairs that Douglas aquired after he placed an advert in *The Daily Telgraph* in October 1986.

There were responses from 131 people, mainly living in England and Wales, but one from as far afield as Cape Town in South Africa.

"GLOVES REQUIRED – Pre 1939 ladies', men's' children's, any style, size, lying forgotten in drawers, dressing tables, cupboards. £5 a pair paid by return of post or returned immediately if unsuitable. Day 01-478 0328, Eve 01-500 2753".

Douglas meticulously recorded details of every person and every pair of gloves offered.

The idea was that this would form a collection of gloves from the 19th and 20th centuries to be called the General Collection, which would both complement and supplement the Spence and Harborow Collections.

Rosemary's Gloves

1960s

This pair of sheer ruched elbow-length gloves came from very close to home as they originally belonged to Rosemary Sweet.

Family was key to Douglas, and Rosemary unstintingly assisted and supported Douglas's collecting activities on behalf of the Glove Collection Trust. Rosemary's gloves became part of the General Collection.

Across the years the General Collection was located in a number of different places.



For example, Douglas and Glove Collection Trust Chairman Stephen Brooker arranged for the Collection to remain at Waddesdon Manor in Buckinghamshire from 2010 to 2016.

From 2018, all the gloves owned by the Glove Collection Trust will be housed at the Fashion Museum Bath and will be known henceforward as the Glove Collection Trust Collection.



Purchase from Mrs Price; gift of Past Assistant Douglas Sweet

Gift of Rosemary Sweet

The Salesman's Case and Gloves

1938

There were always some mysteries in the Collection, often because information had been lost about gloves as they had moved between different locations since first being gifted.

This glove salesman's case from the late 1930s is one such instance; and this is where Douglas's network of Liverymen who shared his passion and enthusiasm for building the Collection came in.

With the super sleuthing skills of both Douglas and his fellow Glove Collection Trust Trustee Past Master Keith Ebsworth, 44 pairs of gloves were re-united with the salesman's case, with which they were originally associated, and now form an interesting example of the work of gloving firm Silas Dyke & Sons in Milborne Port near Sherborne, Dorset in the 1930s.



Gift of Bewsey Bennett Dyke and the Dyke family

Lillian Ann Perkins' Gloves



1930s

The advent of e-Bay in the early 2000s meant that Douglas, with the assistance of Liveryman Marion Kite, was able to spread his collecting net much more widely than before, collecting from vendors in North America.

The second version of the story says that Lillian Ann Perkins acquired the mittens on a family trip to Newfoundland when she was a child.

This pair of sealskin leather mittens, with embroidery in coloured silks in a design of Alpine flowers came from Virginia, USA.

They were hand-made in the 1930s, and produced by Grenfell Industries in Newfoundland in Canada, an organization encouraging work for local skilled yet impoverished women.

The mittens are an interesting example of how family stories sometimes conflict. One version goes that the mittens were bought as a gift for Lillian Ann Perkins of Oklahoma, USA when she was a child by her two older brothers who worked on the highways of Alaska and Northern Canada during the 1930s, and then became pilots during the Second World War.

Whichever version is true, the mittens were clearly a precious possession, kept lovingly for many years. Her name tape, 'Lillian Ann Perkins', is still sewn inside; a memento of the girl who treasured her pretty sealskin mittens.



Purchase from Laura Cooter via e-Bay

The Gloves in a Walnut Shell

1830s

One of the most curious objects in the Collection is this pair of the finest leather gloves rolled up tightly and stored in a walnut shell.

The fashion for gloves that were made of such fine leather they could fit in a walnut shell originated in Limerick in Ireland in

the later 18th century. Although it was said that Limerick Gloves in Shells were made of chicken skin, they were actually made of the skin of unborn calves.

These gloves were part of a large collection of nearly 200 items that Douglas secured for the Glove Collection Trust Collection as a generous donation from the family of Liveryman Bob Ring.



*Gift of Caroline Ring on behalf of the Ring Family;
from the Collection and Estate of Liveryman R H G Ring*

The Metropolitan Police Cart or Van Drivers' Gloves

1899



This pair of mid-tan leather men's gloves, with its patent seal and original labels attached, was also part of the Collection of Liveryman Bob Ring.

These mens gloves were made by leading manufacturer Fownes (established in Worcester in 1887) and date from 1899. They were the sample filed as a patent for the contract to supply the Metropolitan Police with gloves for their police cart and van drivers.

*Gift of Caroline Ring on behalf of the Ring Family;
from the Collection and Estate of Liveryman R H G Ring*

Gloves by Dents

ca. 1966



Douglas served as Chairman of The Glove Guild of Great Britain and as a member of The Glove Trade Committee. He made a point, therefore, of collecting gloves by UK manufacturers.

This pair of bright turquoise blue perforated leather short gloves from the mid-1960s is by Dents, established in 1777, continuing today as a leading British Heritage brand.

Gift of Past Assistant Robert Yentob

Gloves by Miloré

Another major British glove-making firm in the mid-20th century was Miloré, as Dents originally were, based in Worcester.



Douglas added a number of fine examples of gloves by Miloré to the Collection, many of which were samples or unsold pairs with their original swing tickets, noting details such as style number and price.

1950s



*Gift of Caroline Ring on behalf of the Ring Family;
from the Collection and Estate of Liveryman R H G Ring*



French Gloves

1890s

These gloves measure eight inches from the base of the thumb to the bottom of the glove, or eight button length as it is known in the gloving trade.

Historically, much of the gloving trade was centered in France and Douglas accordingly sought to acquire gloves of French manufacture. This pair of cream kid leather gloves from the 1890s is by Fontaine of Paris.



*Gift of Caroline Ring on behalf of the Ring Family;
from the Collection and Estate of Liveryman R H G Ring*



Gloves by Alexandrine

1970s

From gloves of history to gloves within living memory, Douglas was always on the lookout for gloves of exceptional quality and interesting design to add to the Collection.

This pair of wrist length gloves by Alexandrine of Paris from the 1970s - showing exquisite craftsmanship, made of the finest materials, and in a beautiful design - is just one of the many pairs of gloves that Liveryman Marion Kite sent to Douglas for consideration during the time that they worked together to source gloves for the Collection.



Gift of Assistant Marion Kite

Antique Market Find Gloves

1960s

Douglas worked assiduously and enthusiastically with his fellow Trustees and throughout the wider Company to encourage acts of generous donation in support of the Collection.

At the same time he had the spirit of a true collector, always alert and ready for that chance sighting of '*old and interesting gloves*', as he termed it, to add to the Collection.

Whether on holiday, on business, at home, or further afield his collecting antenna were finely attuned. This banana-skin yellow pair of fabric gloves by Pinkham from the 1960s, in a striking variegated polka dot pattern, and with a matching scarf, was just one of Douglas's many 'scoops' for the Collection.



Purchase at Grays Antique Market; gift of Past Assistant Douglas Sweet

Elegant and Stylish Gloves

1930s



Douglas Sweet (1939-2015) was passionately and enthusiastically committed to advocating for and building the Glove Collection Trust Collection.

He was generous with his time and knowledge and worked unstintingly for 30 years to create an extraordinary collection of historic gloves. He was a lovely man, friendly and helpful to everyone, courteous and charming to a fault. The Glove Collection Trust will be forever indebted to him.

In December 2008, just before he retired Douglas was interviewed about his working life owning and managing the family business, Fairheads department store in Ilford.

He talked engagingly and fluently about his life in the drapery retail trade, referencing his love of household textiles and haberdashery, including gloves. Towards the end of the interview he summed up his time at work saying above all he hoped and was proud that he had "*... done it well, and properly*".

Unequivocally, the same can be said of his work building the Glove Collection Trust Collection.

Git of Past Assistant Douglas Sweet