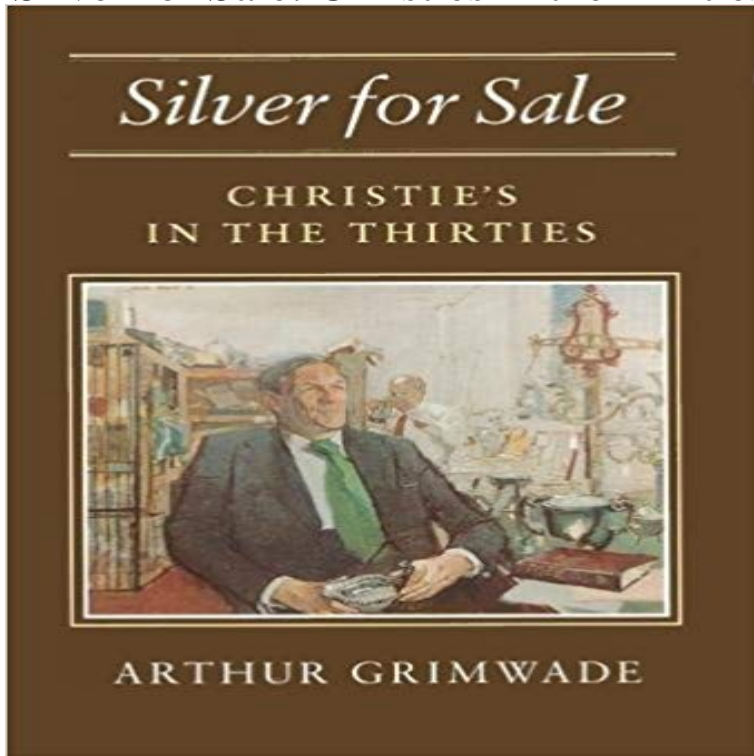


Silver for Sale: Christies in the Thirties



Arthur Grimwade, author of the standard work of reference *London Goldsmiths*, now in its third edition and a sine qua non for all interested in English silver, joined Christies in 1932 aged nineteen, as an assistant to the partner in charge of silver sales. This book is based on a diary of his life in the auction world of the day, from the time he joined Christies until the start of war service in the Navy. When he began his career, which was to last until he retired as Christies silver director in 1978, the bullion price of silver was 1s 2d per Troy ounce and matched Georgian table services could be bought under the hammer for one or two pence per ounce more. He is excited when four Paul Lamerie candlesticks realize over ?200; he visits stately homes on valuations (including a memorable stay at Woburn in 1940); he gives us glimpses of Christies partners, leading dealers and characters of the salerooms, together with accounts of outstanding sales, such as the William Hearst English Silver, the Pierpont Morgan Miniatures, the great Henry Oppenheimer Old Master Drawings. The original diary entries are annotated to provide a graphic record of the placid, almost parochial nature of the art market of the Thirties - a far cry from the sophisticated international operation of today.

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