

Ever wondered whether those paintings gathering dust in granny's loft might include a masterpiece or two? For most of us, such scenarios are mere pipe dreams, while for Sworders it's all in day's work. Here they lift the lid, or perhaps hatch, on some of the more illustrious homes they've represented in recent years.

Across Britain's grand country estates, the attics, storerooms and cellars often hold more than just forgotten furniture or dusty belongings – they hold untapped potential. When managed with care and expertise, an attic sale can offer a dignified and practical way to reclaim space, realise value and share a home's legacy.

Sworders Fine Art Auctioneers has established a reputation for the discreet and effective dispersal of historic collections and country house contents. With a highly experienced team working closely with estate staff and families, the firm offers a bespoke, end-to-end service – beginning with the initial consultation and culminating in the final hammer fall. From ancestral portraits and dinner services, to Roman sculpture and Grand Tour mementoes, the team understands how to bring each object to market in a way that maximises both interest and value.

Central to this approach is an appreciation for the power of provenance. When objects are associated with a distinguished house or family, their stories become intrinsic to their value. Buyers respond not only to the beauty or rarity of an item, but to its history – its place within a larger narrative. The prestige of a named collection can elevate even the humblest of pieces.

Recently, at Holkham Hall, and under the instruction of the 8th Earl of Leicester, Sworders orchestrated The Attic Sale – a landmark event that brought more than 400 items to market. From fragments of Roman marble to fine English furniture that had remained in the Coke family for over three centuries, the sale was a celebration of heritage and

discovery. Working in close collaboration with the Holkham Estate, the team carefully selected, catalogued and curated the collection, producing a visually-striking catalogue with a distinctive identity. The result was a well-attended preview, a lively auction and outstanding financial returns.

*"I would not hesitate to recommend Sworders to anyone contemplating a general sale,"* said the 8th Earl of Leicester. *"Their enthusiastic and very experienced team came with great knowledge and integrated well alongside the modest team here, to minimise disruption to my family and visitors to the estate. The catalogue was beautifully-produced, the preview days were well attended and the sale itself had a real buzz."*

While at Elveden Hall in 2023, The Guinness Sale was held on behalf of Lord Iveagh. This wide-ranging auction drew from furnishings and treasures accumulated across several Guinness family residences, including Farmleigh in Dublin. As with Holkham, Sworders brought rigorous research, refined presentation and logistical precision to the task – highlighting the unique stories behind each lot, capturing compelling imagery within Elveden's striking interiors and setting accurate pre-sale estimates. The result was a sale that not only achieved remarkable prices but also brought renewed energy and attention to the estate itself.

*"Sworders guided me through the process of establishing the right pre-sale estimates that reaped the benefit on sale day with exceptional results,"* said Lord Iveagh. *"It's been joyful seeing Elveden Hall furnished again, and looking so good, with many visitors. I sincerely hope all of the bidders enjoy their purchases as my family have done."*

While most of you won't have your own estate, you might be interested in such sales from the other side of the (rare) coin. For details on upcoming estate sales, as well as other Sworders events, visit [sworder.co.uk](http://sworder.co.uk)

# STASH IN THE ATTIC

