



A HISTORY OF ST ANDREW'S IN 100 OBJECTS

14.

Communion cup &
flagon

Dates: 1746, 1748

Our oldest silverware, a Communion cup, dates from 1746. Its companion piece, a flagon dated two years later, was presented by Richard Walker (vicar, 1728-1745), a leading botanist and founder of the Cambridge Botanic Gardens (also, from 1744, Professor of Moral Philosophy). These pieces represent the Protestant nature of the Church of England and of the understanding of Holy Communion that followed the English Reformation. The chalice of the Middle Ages was for the sacrifice of the Mass celebrated on a stone altar; a cup (of the same form as those used in a domestic setting) was for the sharing of a meal (the Lord's Supper) on a wooden table. The old chalices did not need to be large, for the laity received only in one kind (the host, or bread). The new cups had to be deep and could also be refilled from a flagon.