

A very fine pair of George III Classical Salt Cellars made in London in 1785 by William Pitts.

Sold



Description

Each Salt Cellar stands on an oval cast stepped, pedestal, foot decorated with a gadrooned band. The oval bowl rises to a gadrooned rim and is decorated on the lower half with Classical flat fluting. The side loop handles are decorated with reeding and each has a gilded interior. The Cellars are each engraved with a contemporary Crest, with Ducal Coronet above, and have gilded interiors. They are in excellent condition and are fully marked on the foot including the King's Head incuse duty mark which is only seen in 1784 and 1785, where the King's Head is contained within a cut cornered punch. The Crest and Coronet are those of William Graham, 2nd Duke of Montrose (1712-1790). He was the 6th but eldest surviving son of the 1st Duke and inherited the family's titles and estates in 1742. He served as an ensign in the 3rd Foot Guards in 1730 and as Chancellor of the University of Glasgow from 1742 to 1781. Montrose was a prominent supporter of the Hanoverian claim to the throne during the 1745 Jacobite rebellion and is believed to have anticipated high office. In 1747 he did, however, receive £3,000 for his former office of Sheriff of Dunbartonshire, along with £2,578 for the regalities of Montrose, Menteith, Lennox and Darnley (although he had petitioned for £15,000 for these).

In 1742 Montrose married Lady Lucy Manners, youngest daughter of the 2nd Duke of Rutland. The couple had two children reach adulthood- one son, the future 3rd Duke, and one daughter who married Archibald Douglas, 1st Baron Douglas (one of the figures at the heart of the legal proceedings over the estates of the Dukedom of Douglas, or Douglas Cause, between 1761 and 1769). According to the diary of Lord Robert Seymour the Duchess died 'at table, eating some minced veal. The Duke asking her thro' the means of their intrepeter (being very deaf himself, as likewise blind) how she liked it, Her Grace replied she found it extreamly (sic) good and sunk back in her chair lifeless'. Height: 3 inches, 7.5 cm. Length: 5.5 inches, 13.75 cm. Width: 2.75 inches, 6.88 cm. Weight: 11oz in weight, the pair.