

A very rare early George III Chinese Tea Drum Tea Caddy made in London in 1768 by Robert Piercy.

Sold



Description

The Tea Caddy, which is of the very rare "Drum" form is modelled to simulate the tea drum containers in which tea was imported into England from China and is one of the rarest designs of Tea Caddy to be found. These are usually modelled in the cube form, however the drum design was produced for a short period during the late 1760's and early 1770's. As you will see from the images, the sides are engraved with a horizontal upper and lower band of foliate pluming scrolls on a scratch engraved ground. The design also separates the main body into four panels each engraved with vertical lines to simulate the planks of the chest. The four panels are also engraved with Chinese characters, as seen on the original tea chests. The cover is also engraved with the same designs as seen on the sides and terminates in an outstanding cast floral and foliate finial modelled to simulate a sprig from a tea plant. The hinge on the cover is also beautifully concealed, emphasising the quality of design and production. The Caddy also possesses its original lock,, as the contents were so very valuable in 1768. These Tea Chests were featured on the trade cards of Eighteenth Century Grocers, such as Chandler and Newsom, tea dealers and grocers.

The Caddy is in excellent condition and is fully marked on the base and with the sterling mark on the cover. It is interesting to note that four different specialists were involved in the construction of one drum Tea Caddy and the whole process would take up to three weeks to complete. This design of Tea Caddy seldom appears on the market. Robert Piercy was an especially fine silversmith who was apprentice to the caster maker, Samuel Wood. His quality of pieces produced is emphasised as we know that he was supplying the Royal firm of Parker & Wakelin with pieces from 1766. He had workshops at 21, Foster Lane, when this piece was made.

Height, to the top of the finial: 4.1 inches, 10.25cm.

Diameter: 4 inches, 10cm.

Weight: 14oz.