An extremely rare set of six early George III "I Love Liberty" Teaspoons made in London circa 1765 by Phillip Roker.

Sold



REF: 375244

Mary Cooke Antiques Ltd
12 The Old Power Station, 121 Mortlake High Street, London, SW14 8SN
+44 (0)20 8876 5777

Description

These are very interesting as they are made in two sections, with rare cast "Onslow" pattern ends, which is seldom seen. These are probably the most famous of all picture back teaspoons; the reverse side of the bowls displaying a dove departing from an open cage with an olive branch in its beak, surmounted by the words "I LOVE LIBERTY".The "I love Liberty" motif was almost certainly inspired by the trials of the political activist John Wilkes during the period 1765-1771. John Wilkes (1725-1798) was imprisoned on "Libellous" and "treasonable" charges following his attacks in the North Briton Newspaper against King George III and his government. His stance against the establishment's corruption is considered as the major breakthrough for the freedom of the press in the United Kingdom. The rare Onslow pattern was first produced in the 1760's. however not in great quantities and examples are rare. The pattern is said to have been named after Arthur Onslow (1691-1768) - "The Great Speaker of Parliament".The Spoons are appropriately marked with two bottom struck marks including the lion passant and PR maker's mark for Philip Roker . Roker was apprenticed to the Spoon maker, Joseph Barbutt, when these historic spoons were made. The spoons are in excellent condition and, as you will appreciate, it is unusual to find an unbroken set. In researching the maker's mark, it is shown in A.G. Grimwade's "London Goldsmiths 1697-1837, Their Marks and Lives", Mark 3755, page 266. The example of his work cited is "spoon with Wilkes fancy back" which may refer to these spoons, however we now know that he specialised in such items. The spoons are in quite excellent condition.Length: 4.6 inches, 11.5 cm.

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