

MARY COOKE ANTIQUES LTD
Fine Antique Silver

An exceptionally rare George I Armorial Box, of unusual form, made in London circa 1720 by Ozee L'hommedieu.

Sold



Description

The box is circular, however it has a very unusual slender form. The cover and base have a raised reeded border and the pull off cover is beautifully engraved with a contemporary Armorial, surrounded by a finely executed strap work, blue bell and foliate scroll cartouche, typical of this period. The interior is also finely gilded which indicates the finest quality of production. The box is of a very good gauge and weight and is marked in the base with the distinctive maker's mark of Ozee L'hommedieu. He is recorded as having had workshops at White Lion Street, 1715-39. He was of Huguenot descent and this is clearly seen with the quality of this piece. His mark is illustrated in A.G. Grimwade's, "London Goldsmith's 1697-1837, Their Marks and Lives", Mark 2108. Due to its very slender form, and gilded interior, we feel that it may well have been used on a dressing chest for face powders or rouge, which were a very important element of the dressing tradition for both wealthy Gentlemen and Ladies during this period. The Arms are those of Henley, as used by Anthony Henley 1704-1748 of the Grange, near Alresford, Hampshire. Henley was a British politician who sat in the House of Commons from 1727-34. He was known as a great "Beau", in society circles, and he may well have used this box in the dressing ritual. The Huguenot silversmiths came over to England after the Edict of Nante and their persecution in France for their religious beliefs. It is widely accepted that the Huguenot silversmiths produced the finest items in England during this period, their quality of design and production being exceptional. The most famous of the Huguenot silversmiths was, of course, Paul De Lamerie, recognised as the finest of all British silversmiths. These silversmiths tended not to make boxes and this is the first time we have ever seen one by a Huguenot, such are their rarity.

Diameter: 3 inches, 7.5 cm.

Height: 0.5 inches, 1.25cm.

Weight: 4.5 oz.