

LANGFORDS

Antique & Contemporary Silver

Rare antique silver pocket butt marker & vesta case

John Millward Banks

£2,750



REF: 8135

Height: 10 mm (0.39")

Width: 43 mm (1.69")

Depth: 35 mm (1.38")

Weight: 56 g

Description

This unusual Victorian silver butt marker combines with a vesta case. The flush-hinged lid on one side that opens to reveal nine silver butt markers, engraved 1 to 9 at one end of each. At the opposite end of the case, another lid opens to a vesta case and ribbed match striker. The pocket vesta was the most popular form often made to be suspended from a fob chain or an Albert chain. This lovely example is fitted with its original ring to do just that. The interior is gilded and the body is engraved on one side "FROM ASSHETON".

Ralph Assheton, 1st Baron Clitheroe, KCVO, KStJ, PC, JP, DL, was an English aristocrat and politician.

The vesta case or match safe as they are known in the USA, is a pocket-sized case designed specifically for carrying friction matches. The first successful friction match was invented by English chemist John Walker in 1826, and in 1832 fellow chemist William Newton patented the "wax vesta". Newton named his incendiary invention after the ancient Roman deity Vesta, goddess of hearth, fire and home, and the name was widely adopted as a synonym for matches in everyday language. Since these early matches were prone to accidental ignition, so sturdy little containers quickly became an everyday essential.

Vesta cases are very collectible, with designs ranging from simple rectangular cases to elaborate novelties shaped like pigs, boots, books, owls, insects bottles or musical instruments. The list is endless!