

LANGFORDS

Antique & Contemporary Silver

Queen Anne Britannia standard silver tazza

Maker Not Traced

Sold



REF: 9723

Height: 75 mm (2.95")

Diameter: 248 mm (9.76")

Weight: 495 g

Description

This beautifully simple, early-18th-century silver tazza or comport is in fine and original condition. Finding early-18th-century sterling silver tazzas is rare, and examples in fine condition like this one are sought after. Its simplicity of style and design means it provides a number of serving purposes: petit fours, biscuits, fruit or canapés.

The armorial bearings engraved in the centre of the piece, undoubtedly commemorate the marriage of a gentleman of an as yet unidentified family to an unnamed daughter of the family of Travers. The Travers family were well settled in the locality of the counties of Lancashire and Cheshire over very many generations.

Sadly, it has not been possible to identify the husband as there is a suspicion that he may well have borne his arms without authority, meaning they were probably never formally granted arms by an heraldic body such as The College of Arms or The Court of the Lord Lyon here in the UK. Such arms were self assumed often in a family's distant past.

Britannia silver is a high-grade alloy of silver which has a purity of 95.8% (by weight); higher than sterling silver (92.5%). The Britannia silver is softer and more malleable and today is mostly reserved for creating special commissions.

The Italian word tazza refers to a shallow bowl or dish on a stem with a foot. It is a form of vessel that had been popular since the early sixteenth century. These footed bowls originated in Venice and were made in glass, but gold and silversmiths soon copied the form in precious metals. 16th and 17th century paintings show glass and metalwork tazzas being used to serve delicacies such as fruit, biscuits, sweetmeats, candied fruits, and as purely decorative objects in their own right.