RARE JAMES II Sterling Silver Trefid Fork by John Clifton. London 1688.

John Clifton

Sold

Sanda Lipton Antique Silver
Suite 202, 2 Lansdowne Row, Berkeley Square, London, W1J 6HL

REF: 8872

Description

Rare JAMES II three pronged sterling silver trefid fork of good weight.
Maker: John Clifton. London 1688.

PROVENANCE: How of Edinburgh. A How label is attached to the fork. One side with the date and maker and the other says Trefid Fork (ploughed up near Chichester).
A contemporary crest is engraved at the end of the stem. It is that of BERTIE.
As the fork is hallmarked 1688 it is most probable that this fork belonged to James Bertie, 1st Earl of Abingdon (16 June 1653 - 22 May 1699), styled Hon. James Bertie until 1657 and known as the 5th Baron Norreys from 1657 until 1682 (when raised to the Earldom) or a member of his immediate family. He was an English nobleman who was much involved in the affairs of state revolving around the uncertainty of the Monarchs…….. Monmouth rebellion, the Glorious revolution etc. He hopped around to make sure he was always on the right side.

Trefid forks are very rare indeed. Queen Elizabeth Is Inventory records one or maybe two of these forks but they were mainly found on the Continent. It was only after the return of Charles II from Europe that the trefid fork became more known in England and it did not become popular among the upper and moneyed classes until the end of the 17th Century.
The full set of hallmarks is clearly struck on the reverse of the stem.

Length: 7.6 inches (19.3cm)
Weight: 2.24 troy ounces (63.45 grams)

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