James I silver seal-top spoon

Sold

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REF: 2437

Description

James I sterling silver seal-top spoon of extremely good form. London 1612 by William Frend. The finial is gilt and has the contemporary initials D.S pricked on the flat top. The finial is joined to the hexagonal stem with a v join, as was customary with London spoons. Both the stem and bowl were originally gilt but now only traces of the gilding are apparent. The London town mark is struck in the front of the fig-shaped bowl, while the date mark for 1612, the lion passant and the makers mark are struck very clearly at the base of the reverse of the stem. The initials R.W and the date 1629 are pricked on the reverse of the bowl, together with pricked decoration above and below. All the pricked engraving on this spoon is extremely crisp.

The fact that the date on the back of the bowl is 17 years later than the spoons date mark leads one to assume that this spoon might have been given to a daughter on her marriage. The earliest recorded seal-top spoon in England was circa 1525 but the majority of these spoons were made in the 17th century and their manufacture faded out by the end of that century. The finial was never intended to be used as a seal. William Frend was a specialist spoonmaker and at least two of his apprentices - Thomas Brothwell and Richard Crosse are known spoonmakers.

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