

An important Charles II Porringer and cover made in London in 1681
by Mary King

Sold



Description

This piece is of large size and was almost certainly used as a table centrepiece and a symbol of status and wealth. The main body is of tapering form and stands on a stepped spreading foot. The lower section of the main body is chased with a wide band of acanthus and palm motifs. The cast scroll side handles are attached to the main body with acanthus mouldings. The stepped pull-off cover displays a band of swirl acanthus leaves and terminates in a beautiful bud finial wrapped in foliage. The front of the main body is beautifully engraved with a shield shaped Armorial surrounded by a pluming foliate scroll cartouche. The underside of the cover is engraved with the initials W*D and the underside of the foot with M*M/W*D. The side of the main body displays a full set of hallmarks and the cover displays the maker's mark of Mary King, within a lozenge punch. The underside of the cover is engraved with the scratch weight 8:10 and on the underside of the foot 12:10. The Porringer is in excellent condition, is of a very good weight and has a very fine colour. The Arms are those of Moseley impaling Acton, for Walter Moseley (1646-1712) of the Mere, Enville, co, Stafford and his wife Jane (1658-1743), daughter and eventual heiress of William Acton, third son of Sir Edward Acton 1st Baronet of Aldenham. Walter was High Sheriff of Staffordshire in 1711. The initials MM under the foot are possibly for Michael Mosely (d1757) of Astbury, Chelmarsh, Shropshire, one of the sons of Walter Moseley (1646-1712) and his wife Jane. The initials WD on the cover and under the foot are possibly for Walter Dovey (d1761), of Claverley, Shropshire, a nephew of Michael Moseley (d.1757). The Dovey family seems to have had a connection with the Glynnes of Harwarden as the Glynn archive, held in the National Library of Wales contains a large number of legal papers relating to the legal practice of Waler Dovey's brother Rupert Dovet (d1771). It is extremely rare to find a majot piece being made by a Lady silversmith at this date. The maker's mark MK in a lozenge between two mullets, is that of Mary King, one of only 63 women identified as being engaged in the London silversmithing trades between 1200 and 1800. She was the wife of the plate worker Thomas King who dwelt and carried on his business from a house in Foster Lane, close to Goldsmith's Hall. Following his death in 1680 Mary continued his trade, most probably as a subcontractor to a number of retailers and goldsmiths-bankers. She was granted a connection with the Goldsmith's Company "by courtesy", allowing her to inherit her husband's apprentices and to register a maker's mark in the shape of a lozenge, the heraldic shape for a widow. Mary appears to have died in August/September 1685. Her mark also appears on two silver communion cups dated 1683-4 in the collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum in London. Height: 7.5 inches, 18.75 cm. Length, handle to handle: 9.5 inches, 23.75 cm. Weight: 29oz 16dwt.