

A very rare Queen Anne West Country Tobacco Box made circa 1710,
maker's mark most probably of Richard Warren of Bristol.

Sold



Description

The box is of plain design and oval in form, with a stepped "pull-off" cover. The box is engraved with a contemporary Armorial, with Crest above, all surrounded by a cartouche of pluming scrolls. The Armorial and Crest are of the Henleys family of County Somerset. The base is beautifully engraved with a mid-18th century Architectural cartouche executed to the highest standard, with the inscription "Thomas Ash of Northstoke, Stone Cutter, 1737". The bottom of the cartouche is engraved with the tools of the stone cutters trade, flanked by shells and foliate scrolls. Northstoke is a hamlet situated between Bath and Bristol and Thomas Ash was a subsequent owner of the box. Thomas Ash was obviously a wealthy individual as a marble funeral monument, for his wife, can be seen inside Northstoke Church which reads : " Under Neath this Place Restin Hope of a Joyful Resurrection the Body of DEBORAH the Wife of THOMAS ASH of this Par, who Died 2nd day of Jan 1769 Aged 68 Ys. Keep Innocently and do the thing that is Right For that will surely bring peace at the last". This Box is in excellent condition and is well marked in the base with RW in Gothic script. This was last on the market in November 1993 when it was part of the Mallory of Bath exhibition " An Exhibition of Silver Spoons and Small Work (Small Wares), from 1575, to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the British Antique Dealers' Association, BADA, 13-27 November 1993, at E.P. Mallory & Son Ltd, 1-4 Bridge Street, Bath. The box is fully illustrated in the catalogue of the exhibition. The Authority on West Country Silver, Tim Kent, discusses in "West Country Silver Spoons and Their Makers 1550-1750" that Richard Warren was one of the silversmiths who had to be reprimanded by the Court for being slow to adhere to the new Britannia Standard laws enforced by the London Goldsmiths company, as were a number of the West Country silversmiths. He also discusses this specific box and the maker in "The Finial", April 1994. Length: 3.9 inches, 9.75 cm. Width: 2.95 inches, 7.38 cm. Height: 1 inch, 2.5 cm. Weight: 5oz.