

THE HOW MAIDENHEAD SPOON. An exceptionally rare Elizabeth I Maidenhead Spoon made in Dorchester circa 1585 by Lawrence Stratford.

Sold



## Description

The Spoon has a fig shaped bowl and faceted octagonal stem. The top of the stem terminates in a finely detailed cast Maidenhead finial, which is palely gilded. The reverse of the bowl is scratch engraved with the contemporary initials WG. The Spoon is in excellent condition, has a good colour, and is marked with the makers mark in the bowl and a mullet and small quatrefoil on the stem. Length: 6.6 inches, 16.5cm

Spoons from Dorchester are very scarce. Lawrence Stratfords father, John, was a prosperous goldsmith in the town, of which he was Bailiff in 1552, and in 1558/9 was assessed at the very substantial figure of £ 9 in goods. Lawrence no doubt succeeded to the business, and served as Bailiff in 1583. The 1593 Tax lists him at £ 3 in goods, but the 1599 return does not mention him, so he may well have died circa 1595.

During the 1570s Lawrence provided Communion Cups for about 30 parishes in Dorset, mainly west of the River Stour.

## PROVENANCE

The spoon was previously in the Collection of Mrs Jane How, one of the foremost and most famous British silver dealers of the 20th century. A picture of Mrs How, with her great Old English Mastiffs, outside St Jamess Palace, is shown.

## Literature:

How - Volume 1 page 232-3

T.A. Kent, West Country Silver Spoons and their Marks, 1550-1750 illustrated on page 154, Plate E, Number 2.