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Trefid, Engraved

RAT-TAIL	Rudimentary
LENGTH	19.7cm / 7.7in
WEIGHT	40gm / 1.28oz
MAKER	Unascribed
MAKER'S MARK	Tulip, fleur-de-lys
DATE	c.1675
PERIOD	Charles II
TOWN	Provincial
COLLECTION	Private

DESCRIPTION

A spoon of good gauge and colour. Overall this group of spoons has a puritan feel about them and this spoon is no exception. The base of the stem meets the bowl with a rudimentary rat-tail, and the bowl has the egg shape and deep curves found on puritan spoons. The trefid terminal is very angular, another typical puritan feature. On the front of the terminal stylised leaves and a flower bud are engraved, towards the bowl lines are engraved down each side and across in front of the bowl – these appear to be a continuation of the design rather than maker's guidelines. On the back of the stem 1681 over AC over EP is pricked upside down. Upside-down pricking is a feature on a few spoons and I am not aware of the reason; pricking is normally read holding the bowl in your hand. This pricking has been done over another set of initials.

In the bowl and thrice on the stem is a fleur-de-lys in a beaded circle with a matted background, and a tulip mark is struck once on the back of the stem. Tulip marks are also found on the shaded roundels type of spoon from the Wiltshire-Hampshire border, probably from the Salisbury area. This tulip mark may also be seen on a trefid with a cartouche, spoon no. 148.

PROVINCIAL ENGRAVED GROUP

These are interesting spoons that I first recognised as a group in the How of Edinburgh sale in 2007 (lot nos. 79 to 86). Prior to that I had noted similar spoons in How, *Silver Spoons* (vol. I, pp. 336-7); the Hows refer to these as 'somewhat leaden in appearance and may well be below standard'. They were to become lot no. 84. The Hows also show (pp. 338-9) two further engraved spoons from this





group; the middle spoon was in the How sale as lot no. 86. In the Paterson sale at Christie's on 10 November 1998, lot no. 64 is another style of spoon I would assign to this group. It is slightly different in that the terminal is wider and had three rounded lobes; engraved on the front of the terminal for approximately a third of the stem are stylised feathers.

On the engraved provincial trefids there are very angular terminals with engraving on the front, starting at the top of the terminal and occupying approximately one third of the stem. The engraving includes a mixture of hatched lines, flowers, leaves and buds.

A variation has slightly more rounded terminals with either more rounded lobes or the traditional ears we find with trefids. Examples include the Paterson spoon mentioned above. On these the decoration is varied, including stylised feathers, engraved lace decoration with hatched diamonds and lozenges, flowers and leaves, and die-struck decoration.

The Hows evidently considered these spoons to be a variation on a theme; they kept and used the seven lots referred to above as working specimens to further their knowledge.

**COMMENT**

On a number of provincial spoons fleur-de-lys marks appear quite regularly in different designs, in conjunction with other marks and also ascribed maker's marks. It is conceivable that the fleur-de-lys was used as an early sign of quality for the silver.

**PROVENANCE**

Private collection  
J.H. Bourdon-Smith Ltd  
How of Edinburgh sale, Woolley & Wallis,  
Salisbury, 30 October 2007, lot no. 85,  
£1,250 hammer

### ENGRAVED TREFID SPOONS

This is a very small style of spoon that come from the area between Sherborne in the west and Salisbury in the east, a very similar area to that of the shaded roundel spoons described later in this chapter. They appeared for a relatively short period, c.1670–c.1685. A number of the town marks found on these spoons are also found on the shaded roundels and are illustrated with them, which is the reason they start with T. None of these spoons has a date letter and therefore each can be dated only according to the pricked dates. The display of terminals is for comparison rather than to show progression in the style.

The spoon with terminal X is possibly from a set of six spoons illustrated in Michael Snodin, *English Silver Spoons* (1974; p.30); if so, that is the only evidence that this type of spoon was made in sets.

Terminal No	Marks	Date	Maker	Town / Area
A	I	C.1675	Unascribed	Salisbury area
B	X	C.1675	Unascribed	Mid Wessex area
C	I	C.1675	Unascribed	Salisbury area
D	XI	C.1675	Unascribed	Salisbury area
E	VIII	C.1674	Antony Wilkinson	Salisbury
F	VIII	C.1674	Antony Wilkinson	Salisbury
G	VI	C.1685	Unascribed	Mid Wessex area



A



B



C



D



E



F



G