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Straining Spoon

RAT-TAIL	Plain
LENGTH	43.2cm / 16.95in
WEIGHT	157.1gm / 5.03oz
MAKER	Henry Lyon
MAKER'S MARK	HL above a lion guardant in an angular shield
DATE	c.1685
PERIOD	James II
TOWN	London
COLLECTION	Private



DESCRIPTION

An unusual and fine large straining spoon. The wooden handle was replaced by Mrs How in recent years, in the style of the original. The bowl is of good gauge and colour; it is almost round and deep, and has holes pierced from the outside covering half its width. Within the bowl, clearly stamped twice, is a maker's mark H L above a lion guardant in an angular shield for Henry Lyon alongside the piercing. The bowl is soldered to the solid plain rat-tail, partly covering some of the contemporary pierced holes. The handle is partially solid silver; it tapers to a hollow section of silver which is joined to the later wooden handle and accounts for approximately half the spoon's overall length.

COMMENT

The spoon came with a How of Edinburgh ticket still attached, on which it is referred to as a 'Pierced Gravy Spoon (NFS [not for sale])'. The ticket also states that the spoon is English provincial, ref. no.

10381. It is an example of a spoon about which there are still things to learn and a reminder that we need sometimes to read historical documents with an open mind.

PROVENANCE

Private collection
How of Edinburgh, stock sale Woolley & Wallis, Salisbury, 30 October 2007, lot no. 387, £5,000 hammer





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Trefid, Plain

RAT-TAIL	Rudimentary
LENGTH	43.2cm / 16.95in
WEIGHT	136.3gm / 4.35oz
MAKER	Unascribed
TOWN Mark	Crowned X within a beaded circle
DATE	c.1685
PERIOD	James II
TOWN	Exeter
COUNTY	Devon
COLLECTION	Private



DESCRIPTION

The bowl of this interesting spoon is round and reasonably shallow, with signs of wear. On the back is a rudimentary rat-tail, and the bowl is in line with the stem. In the bowl is the town mark of a crowned X within a beaded circle; it is also thrice on the back of the stem near the bowl and once near the terminal. The terminal has been notched to create the trefid effect and a pair of small ears enhances the effect of the design. On the front of the terminal guidelines may be seen, together with a hole to allow the spoon to be hung from a hook. Below is an engraved contemporary coat of arms.

COAT OF ARMS

The arms are two wolves statant impaling a cannon. See Papworth, *British Armorial* (1874; available online), page 150, for two wolves, and page 899, for a gun. The wolves could be Low(e), Wolf(e) or Stanhope; this is a classic case of an early coat of arms that cannot be categorically assigned to a family.

COMMENT

This fine and unusual spoon is possibly the longest trefid you will find of this early date. The marks are struck on the back of stem to simulate a London marked spoon.

MAKER

The mark in the bowl crowned X within a beaded circle is not recorded in Kent, *West Country Spoons* (appendix A).

PROVENANCE

Private collection
Lawrences, Crewkerne, 10 October 2011,
lot no. 186, £2,700 hammer
Private collection

