

LANGFORDS

Antique & Contemporary Silver

Antique English sterling silver partridge model

Maker Not Traced

£2,900



REF: 9083

Height: 145 mm (5.71")

Width: 200 mm (7.87")

Depth: 85 mm (3.35")

Weight: 383 g

Description

Very fine antique silver model of a partridge. Both the detailing and the form of the bird are extremely well executed with beautiful hand chasing to create a lifelike rendition of this wonderful game bird. It is a beautiful ornamental model and will look superb as part of dining table decoration.

The head of the partridge is detachable which is common for animal models of this age. During the late 19th century a thriving industry had built up in Germany and Holland, making silver models for the British market. From traditional game birds to knights in armour and nefs (model ships on wheels). These models were made in sterling silver (925) and each imported piece was usually sent to a UK assay office to be tested and stamped with import hallmarks.

During this period, a minor trade war broke out in Europe with England imposing a tax on luxury goods, including silver models. To legally avoid this punitive tax, enterprising workshops in Germany and Holland adapted their designs of animals, ships and birds, making them into vessels. Ships were made into two parts, hull and deck with masts and rigging; while birds and animals had removable heads. Suddenly they were no longer considered just luxury items, they were functional. This ploy persisted into the early 20th century, when the tax was removed.