

LANGFORDS

Antique & Contemporary Silver

Victorian silver argyle (argyll)

Martin, Hall & Co

Sold



REF: 1097

Height: 110 mm (4.33")

Diameter: 82 mm (3.23")

Description

Late Victorian sterling silver argyle with integral hot water jacket to keep the gravy warm. This lovely example is fully hallmarked with stamps also on the lid and water jacket cover. The handle is insulated with its original and rather elegant wicker wrap.

It was John Campbell (1723-1806), the fifth Duke of Argyll, who hated the way that gravy arrived cold to his table from the kitchens of Inverary Castle, and who promoted a new piece of tableware designed to maintain the warmth of the gravy in its vessel. So, the argyle was born - a gravy warmer made in shapes similar to a covered coffee pot with a handle and spout. The gravy is kept warm by means of hot water contained in a compartment created by a double exterior wall, a compartment created by a false bottom or a central vertical cylindrical tube which holds a heated iron rod.

A secondary important feature was that the spout was placed at the bottom of the container which allowed the gravy to be drawn off from underneath the layer of fat that settled on the top.

Argyles were produced up until the Victorian period but since many of the early examples were converted into coffee or teapots, they have become quite rare.