

LANGFORDS

Antique & Contemporary Silver

American silver overlay perfume flask

Maker Not Recorded

Sold



REF: 6824

Height: 95 mm (3.74")

Width: 75 mm (2.95")

Description

Antique American silver perfume flask with glass body and silver overlay. The overlaid design is hand engraved and incorporates flowers, scrollwork and lattice patterns. The flask is surmounted by a secure bayonet twist lid.

In 1889, the decorative technique of applying sterling silver designs to glass was patented by Oscar Pierre Erand and John Benjamin Round for Stevens & Williams Ltd in Birmingham and silver overlay found its first wave of popularity in the early 1900s.

Sterling silver was applied to glass by a chemical method so that a cut-out design of silver metal appears against a clear or coloured glass background. Where the silver was thick enough a silversmith might further embellish the piece with hand engraving. During this initial vogue, this very labour-intensive production technique meant high retail costs, but despite this from 1895 to the early 1920s the art of silver overlay had a fervent following and became a decorative rage. The silver designers would choose patterns that complemented the piece, for instance swirling Art Nouveau flowers applied to a perfume bottle, a waterscape of bulrushes might decorate a water jug, or a wine jug could feature intertwining grapevines.

The fashion had declined by the mid-1930s but with the development of a more economical process, its revival followed immediately after WWII and lasted until the late 1950s.