

LANGFORDS

Antique & Contemporary Silver

Set of 4 Norwegian plique-à-jour enamel salt cellars

Elkington & Co

Sold



REF: 7123

Height: 26 mm (1.02")

Diameter: 65 mm (2.56")

Weight: 157 g

Description

Beautiful set of four Norwegian gilded salt cellars and their salt spoons with cobalt blue enamel centres in the bowls of the cellars and surrounded by delicate scrollwork and colourful enamel using the plique-à-jour method of construction. Each cellar rests on three openwork scroll supports and the four shovel-shaped salt spoons have elegant twisted stems. All pieces are fitted in their original case.

The set bears import marks for Elkington & Co in Birmingham.

First seen in France and Italy in the 14th century - although some say discovered by Benvenuto Cellini in the 15th century - plique-à-jour (French: open to light) was rediscovered in France circa 1900 and soared to new heights in the decorative arts during the Art Nouveau period.

The plique-à-jour technique is designed to produce an effect of a stained-glass window in miniature through the use of translucent enamels and this technique has been used largely for making vessels, jewellery and, in Russia, demitasse spoons.

The technique is exactly the same as cloisonné enamelling except that after the enamel is fused and sufficiently annealed, the supporting metal sheet, usually aluminium-bronze, is removed, leaving a network of metal strips filled with enamel windows. The enamels can be carefully polished to enhance their appearance.