



A GEORGE III SILVER JOCKEY CAP CADDY SPOON

Object Number: # 367

Birmingham 1799

Joseph Taylor

City's hallmark/Assay office mark: Anchor in a pointed shield for Birmingham

Maker's mark: "IT" in a square for Joseph Taylor

Date letter: "b" in a pointed shield for 1799

Duty mark: King's head

Length: 5 cm (1,9 in.); approx. **weight:** 5,7 gr. (0.2oz.)

Pictures



Detailed Information

George III Silver Jockey Cap Caddy Spoon

This very well preserved and worked out tea caddy spoon has the very imaginative form of a jockey cap. It is decorated with bright-cut decoration, while the borders of the cap as the top of it are engraved with floral adornments. On the cap's border the initials "AB" within a shield. All marks are well visible punched.

Origins of the Caddy Spoon

A caddy spoon is a type of spoon for use in taking and measuring dry tea from a tea caddy, usually small enough to fit the opening. The function of the caddy spoon was originally served, until the second half of the 18th century, by the lid of the tea caddy itself. Around 1760, the shape of the tea caddy changed, becoming flatter and more box-like, and a separate implement for measuring the tea was needed. It is around the mid-eighteenth century that English examples of tea caddy spoons were developed.

Caddy spoons were always required to be hallmarked, being excluded from the exemption of the English act of 1790 relating to small articles.

Birmingham Silver

Birmingham was a rapidly expanding commercial center at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Cloth and leather trading became during this period less important and were replaced by metalworking skill. Above all, the production of toys, buckles and guns was very profitable for the city; Birmingham got even the nickname 'the toy shop of Europe'. Leading toy maker in the town around the mid-eighteenth century was John Taylor. However, metal toy trade was in the decline by 1850.

In the domain of silversmaking in Birmingham, Matthew Boulton dominated there during 1760's-1790's. Among other small objects of high quality made in silver (e.g. toothpick boxes) belonged also the tea caddy spoons.

Meister

Joseph Taylor was active as a silversmith in Birmingham between at least 1773 and 1813. There are two registered marks for him one for the period 1773-1801 and one for 1813 (a round shield). There are still several tea caddy spoons of him preserved, see e.g. in Jones, 1981, fig. 43c. Joseph Taylor was most probably the originator of the Jockey Cap form in caddy spoons.

Literature

Jones, Kenneth Crisp (Hrsg.), *The Silversmiths of Birmingham and their Marks 1750-1980*, N.A.G. Press Ltd.: London, 1981.

Norie, John, *Caddy spoons: An illustrated guide*, London: Murray, 1988.