

LANGFORDS

Antique & Contemporary Silver

Edwardian silver & tortoiseshell bridge box

Levi & Salaman

Sold



REF: 2898

Height: 60 mm (2.36")

Width: 120 mm (4.72")

Depth: 85 mm (3.35")

Description

Handmade antique sterling silver bridge playing cards box with a hinged tortoiseshell cover inlaid with silver icons denoting the suits - hearts, diamonds, spades, clubs - and the word Bridge in elegant script. The box is lined in the original blue leather and the original bridge blocks inside.

The technique used on this box is called piqué, where gold or silver is inlaid into another material, in this case silver on tortoiseshell. Despite being expensive, the use of tortoiseshell in the decorative arts was very popular in 18th and 19th century Europe. Not only did it have a beautiful mottled appearance and was durable, but it was also lightweight and could be easily fashioned into other shapes; jewellery boxes and tea caddies were prime examples.

Tortoiseshell is quite malleable when heated, so when very fine gold, or in this case silver, was fashioned into delicate designs and then pressed into the warmed tortoiseshell, the silver would cool and the shell contracted to hold the silver in place.