LANGFORDS
Antique & Contemporary Silver

Antique continental silver nef centrepiece

Maker Not Recorded

£9,500

Langfords
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REF: 7822

Height: 400 mm (15.75")

Width: 365 mm (14.37")

Depth: 110 mm (4.33")

Weight: 1732 g

Description

Known as a nef, this is an attractive silver model galleon created in full sail with wonderful detail. The ship is mounted on stylised dolphin supports incorporating wheels for easy rolling up and down the dining table. The hull is accurately engraved with a natural wood grain and has a wonderful snarling dolphin hinged rudder. A full complement of cannons are on board.

This attractive example is made in 800 standard silver, almost certainly in Germany.

While early nefs were just simple hulls and served as containers for perhaps cutlery or salt and spices, they later became such detailed works of art that there was no longer any space to hold anything and they evolved into purely decorative centrepieces.

During the late 19th century and beginning of the 20th a tax was applied to imported luxury goods. To avoid the tax, ornamental pieces like this nef and other imported models, were created with removable sections to suggest a return to their useful purpose, and hence avoided this tax.

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