



Antique 1790's Old Sheffield Plate Tall Candlesticks With Hurricane Glass Shades



1 100 EUR

Period : 18th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Silver metal

Width : 16.5 cm

Height : 53 cm

Description

Stunning pair of Rococo Revival Old Sheffield plate candleholders with hurricane glass shades, dating to the Regency Period. Waisted columns with bulbous knops and shoulders are raised on fluted circular bases. Opulent hand-chased relief decoration of acanthi foliage, scrolls, stylised ribbed waves to bases and nautilus sea shells.

The storm shades are made of thick glass and have an inverted bell-shape.

Very monumental candlesticks standing at half a metre tall assembled and an absolutely exquisite example of English silversmithing craftsmanship.

Sheffield, c. 1790s

Dealer

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Mobile : +44 7738009924

Buntingford SG9 0PY

6166 g
34 cm tall without shades
53 cm tall with shades
16.5 cm across the base

Excellent antique condition. Copper bleeding appropriate to age and use; the top of one sconce is a bit uneven; fleabites to the lower rims of the glass shades.

Sheffield Plate, now known by collectors as "Old Sheffield Plate" was accidentally invented by Thomas Boulsover, of Sheffield's Cutlers Company, in 1743. While trying to repair the handle of a customer's silver knife, he heated it too much and the silver started to melt. When he examined the damaged handle, he noticed that the silver and copper had fused together very strongly. Experiments showed that the two metals behaved as one when he tried to reshape them, even though he could clearly see two different layers. Boulsover developed the technique of sandwiching an ingot of copper between two thin plates of silver, tightly binding it with wire and then heating it in a furnace. This was then milled into sheets from which objects were made.

The production of Sheffield Plate declined after 1840 when George Elkington invented electro silver plating which is why genuine Old Sheffield Plate items are so rare and highly regarded. Furthermore, electroplating tends to produce a "brilliant" surface with a hard colour - as it consists of pure rather than sterling silver and is usually deposited more thinly which causes it to lose silvering much quicker than Old Sheffield ware that still retains its beauty 250 years down the line.