



Britannia Silver Champeve Dial Verge by Windmills
£9,749.00

An early 18th Century English verge by Windmills in hallmarked silver pair cases. Deep full plate fire gilt movement with Egyptian pillars. Fusee and chain with worm and wheel barrel setup between the plates. Pierced and engraved winged cock with two additional steady feet to the table. Pierced and engraved foot and plate for the silver regulator disc. Plain three arm steel balance. Silver champleve dial with Roman and Arabic numerals, silver gilt signed centre, blue steel beetle and poker hands. Matching silver pair cases, later steel pendant and silver bow. The inner case with the name "Robt Hearle", probably for the original owner. Outer case with seven joint square hinge. Both cases with number corresponding to that on the movement and maker's mark "Ia".

A fine example of a champleve dial watch by Windmills. The cases both bear Britannia silver hallmarks. Hallmarks in silver watch cases are rare until 1739. Cases were regarded as small pieces which were not required to be hallmarked until the Act of 1738/39. In 1697 it was decreed that all silver should be of the higher Britannia standard of 95.84%. Britannia silver is softer than Sterling silver and therefore less suitable for articles subject to high wear, such as watch cases. A further deterrent to submitting cases for hallmarking. The Sterling silver standard was re-introduced in 1720 alongside the Britannia standard which is still rarely used to this day. One regulation which came into effect with the 1697 act was that makers should destroy their existing punches and register new ones bearing the first two letters of the surname. Most makers marks had consisted of the first letter of their Christian and Surname. In practice it seems that the regulations were generally ignored by makers of watch cases who continued to use the existing system. William Jaques (Free of the Clockmakers Company 1681) was one of the makers who complied with the act replacing his earlier mark of "WJ" with a new punch "Ia". He sometimes used as many as four marks in each case. In his book British Watchcase Gold & Silver Marks, Philip Priestley remarks he "has recorded less than ten fully hallmarked Britannia watchcases worldwide." Also see the entry for William Jaques, page 374. Windmills often used William Jaques for his cases. He was one of the very few English makers to add either one or two feet to the table of the cock. These protect the balance staff from rough handling

Hallmarked London 1712
Signed Tho Windmills London
Diameter 57 mm

Condition	Excellent
Materials	Britannia Standard Silver
Hallmark	1712

Antique ref: A11101