

Dessert fork





Label

This diminutive dessert fork was once used by the Washingtons and their guests to sample the sweetmeats, candied fruits, and puddings that constituted the final course at a formal dinner. Conspicuously engraved with the Washington crest, it was among the "2 Setts best Silver handle Knives & Forks best London Blades" sent to George Washington by his London agent in 1757. Washington's investment in specialized services of flatware demonstrated luxury at a time when the possession of a fork of any material was a sign of aspiring gentility, and enabled him to confidently entertain members of the colonial Virginia elite.

Description

Pistol handled fork with three steel tines and silver handle; three steel tines rise from a baluster form shaft with flared collar that is inserted into the handle; silver handle with ribbed sides terminating in a volute covered with an acanthus leaf; butt of the handle is engraved with the Washington crest, a winged griffin rising from a ducal coronet.

Date

1757

People

- **Dru Drury I** - *Possible maker*
 - **Dru Drury II** - *Possible maker*
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Geography

England

Material/Technique

Silver, steel

Dimensions

Overall (H x W x D): 6 1/2 in. x 7/8 in. x 7/8 in. (16.51 cm x 2.22 cm x 2.24 cm)

Credit Line

Gift of Mrs. William Henry Brown, 1891

Marks

Stamped near the head of the handle on the obverse: an obscured mark, probably of the lion passant.

Stamped near the head of the handle on the reverse: an almost entirely obscured mark.
