

8-day mantel chronometer by Parkinson & Frodsham



A unique solid silver cased 8-day mantel chronometer by the esteemed makers Parkinson & Frodsham, dating from 1872.

The case

The solid silver case is hallmarked on the base for sterling silver, Birmingham 1872, Elkington & Co..

The base of the case is beautifully inscribed 'PRESENTED BY THE TEACHERS AND SCHOLARS OF KING EDWARD THE SIXTH'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS TO THE REVD. CHARLES EVANS, M.A. ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE OFFICE OF HEAD MASTER OF THE FREE GRAMMAR SCHOOL, BIRMINGHAM, JULY 12 1872'.

The Dial

The silver dial is indistinctly signed Parkinson & Frodsham, Change Alley, LONDON, the serial number which follows now sadly entirely rubbed.

The back of the dial is scratched 4081, which we imagine to be the serial number. According to other recorded serial numbers, this ties in with the 1872 date of manufacture.

Below centre is a subsidiary dial for running seconds, and above the centre the power reserve sector marked 0-8, again with rubbed directions for UP DOWN and WIND.

The Movement

A brass dust cover protects the 8-day fusee chain movement. The plate has a chequered pattern and is signed 'Parkinson & Frodsham Change Alley London'. The bimetallic balance has adjusting screws and two keystone compensation weights, a spring detent escapement, and blued steel helical

balance. The balance pivot is set in faceted diamond endstones.

Provenance

This exceptional chronometer is particularly rare because it features the maker's signature on the movement and also on the dial. It was almost certainly produced as a specific commission from the King Edward School, Birmingham, as a retirement gift to the headmaster, Reverend Charles Evans, M.A. The commission itself is interesting as it is a particularly fine gift for a Head Master, however the recent history of the school gives us an indication as to why; for the school had employed the renowned architect Charles Barry to re-design the buildings, and none other than Pugin to re-model the interior. (In fact this is where Barry and Pugin first became acquainted). Charles Barry had already designed numerous important buildings by this time, such as the Manchester Art Gallery and the Traveller's Club, Pall Mall, and later in his career he designed the Houses of Parliament. There was, therefore, a tradition of employing the best designers of the day at the school, and so it is little wonder that the prestigious makers Elkington and Parkinson & Frodsham were selected to produce this important presentation gift. For here is a timepiece of the upmost accuracy, in the finest quality case and by the foremost craftsmen in the country, made in a style that echoed that of the school buildings.

Parkinson & Frodsham

The famous firm of Parkinson and Frodsham was founded in about 1800 by William Parkinson and W. J. Frodsham, both admitted to the Clockmakers Company in 1802. They traded at 4 Change Alley, London and later from 1891 at 16 Queen Victoria Street, at 35 Royal Exchange in 1893-5, 15B Royal Exchange in 1896-1905 and 5 Budge Row from 1906 to 1947. Their name is synonymous with excellence and accuracy, they produced marine and pocket chronometers of the very highest order, exporting them internationally to shipping companies and selling them to the Admiralty.

26cm high x 24cm wide x 18.5cm deep

Overhauled and guaranteed for 3 years.