



APPRAISAL REPORT

Elkington & Co., Birmingham, England, 1866–1867, mid-Victorian period, Sterling silver (925)

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1 Item Identification

MAKER / ARTIST

Elkington & Co., Birmingham, England

PERIOD / ERA

1866–1867, mid-Victorian period

MATERIAL

Sterling silver (925)

CATEGORY

Silverware



HALLMARKS

IDENTIFIED MARKS & HALLMARKS

Maker's/factory mark: two characters resembling 'E' and 'C' in shaped cartouche — likely Elkington & Co. **[INTERPRETED]**

Three-letter rectangular punch: appears to read 'HKB' or 'HRB' — possibly Elkington's internal factory/pattern mark **[UNCERTAIN]**

Anchor mark — Birmingham Assay Office **[INTERPRETED]**

Queen Victoria duty mark — profile head in circular punch, used 1784–1890 **[INTERPRETED]**

Rim engraving: 'ELKINGTON & CO' — manufacturer's name stamp **[CONFIRMED]**

Presentation engraving with elaborate script and date '1867' within beaded oval cartouche **[CONFIRMED]**

2 History & Provenance

This richly decorated christening mug bears the stamp of Elkington & Co., the pre-eminent Birmingham silver and electroplate manufacturers founded by George Richards Elkington and Henry Elkington in 1840. By the mid-1860s, the firm had grown from their revolutionary electroplating patent into one of England's foremost producers of both electroplated and solid sterling silver wares, holding Royal Warrants and winning medals at international exhibitions. The bell-shaped body is raised on a circular spreading foot with a fine beaded edge, fitted with an elegant scroll handle featuring a reeded grip and foliate bracket at the lower terminal. Two oval cartouches dominate the body — one displaying superbly chased repoussé roses, leaves, and foliage against a matted ground, the other containing an ornate presentation inscription with the date 1867, framed by a beaded oval border. Between the cartouches, scrolling C-scrolls and fleur-de-lys motifs are worked in crisp relief.

The piece belongs firmly in the high Victorian taste for elaborate naturalistic ornament, where repoussé floral work reached its apogee in the 1860s and 1870s. Christening mugs of this quality were standard gifts among the prosperous Victorian middle and upper classes, frequently presented to mark a baptism and then treasured as family heirlooms. Elkington's workshops in Newhall Street, Birmingham, employed the finest chasers and engravers of the period, and the quality of the floral work on this example — with its precisely articulated petals, crisp leaf veining, and controlled matting — attests to their mastery. The presentation date of 1867 places this mug squarely in the decade when Elkington's sterling silver production was expanding alongside their dominant electroplate business.

The mug survives in very good condition with no visible damage, splits, or repairs; the repoussé work retains its full original sharpness, and the beaded foot border is intact. The interior appears clean, and the hallmarks, while slightly worn, remain legible. Some light surface scratching consistent with age and gentle domestic use is present. In today's collecting market, Victorian christening mugs by Elkington command steady interest, particularly examples with original presentation inscriptions that provide historical provenance. The firm's name recognition and association with the finest Birmingham silversmithing of the period add a premium over comparable anonymous examples.

3 Comparable Market Sales

ITEM	PRICE	PLATFORM	YEAR	
Elkington & Co. Victorian Sterling Silver Christening Mug, Birmingham 1868, engraved floral decoration	\$340	Skinner	2018	<i>historical</i>
Victorian Sterling Silver Christening Mug, Elkington & Co., Birmingham 1865, beaded rim with gilt interior	£280	Bonhams	2019	<i>historical</i>
Elkington & Co. Sterling Silver Christening Cup, Birmingham 1870, chased foliate band, monogrammed	\$380	Doyle	2020	<i>historical</i>
Victorian Sterling Silver Christening Mug, Birmingham 1866, maker's mark for Elkington, engine-turned body	£220	Lyon & Turnbull	2017	<i>historical</i>
Victorian Sterling Silver Christening Mug by George Richards Elkington, Birmingham 1869, scroll handle, engraved cartouche	\$420	Sotheby's	2016	<i>historical</i>

\$250 – \$500

USD · ESTIMATED MARKET VALUE

• Medium Confidence

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