

Finch & C^o



A VERY RARE AND COMPLETE CASED TREPHINE SET BY LAUNDY IN ORIGINAL MAHOGANY BOX
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CIRCA 1783-1802

SIZE: 20.5CM WIDE X 18.5CM DEEP X 6CM HIGH

LITERATURE

IN ITEM NO35 OF THE FINCH & CO CATALOGUE FOR 2002, A 17TH CENTURY OIL PAINTING, THERE IS DEPICTED SEVERAL PERIOD SURGICAL INSTRUMENTS ONE OF WHICH IS A TREPHINE AND AN ELEVATOR. THESE INSTRUMENTS WERE OF OBVIOUS IMPORTANCE AND A SYMBOL OF STATUS FOR SURGEONS TO ACQUIRE. IT IS INCREDIBLE NOW TO THINK THAT THE OPERATION INVOLVED SAWING INTO THE SKULL TO RELIEVE PRESSURE OR TO RESTORE BROKEN FRAGMENTS FROM FRACTURES WITH THE HELP OF AN ELEVATOR ALL WITHOUT ANAESTHETIC MUST HAVE BEEN WITHSTOOD AND UNDERGONE WILLINGLY BY THE PATIENT.

TREPHINES AS INSTRUMENTS ARE FIRST MENTIONED IN THIS COUNTRY IN 1600, BUT THE HISTORY OF THE OPERATION ITSELF GOES BACK TO PREHISTORY.

ARCHAEOLOGISTS HAVE FOUND PREHISTORIC SKULLS IN EUROPE WITH PERFORATIONS THAT HAVE THE RIMS OF THE HOLE BLUNTED SUGGESTING THAT THE PATIENT SURVIVED AS A HEALING PROCESS HAD TAKEN PLACE. THESE EARLY TREPHINING OPERATIONS WERE PROBABLY CARRIED OUT TO RELIEVE HEADACHES OR EPILEPSY AND WERE CAREFULLY PERFORMED BY SHAMAN OR SORCERERS; THEIR

ONLY INSTRUMENTS BEING THE SHARPENED EDGES OF STONES OR FLINTS.
LAUNDY IS THE MAKER'S NAME ON THIS SET OF POLISHED STEEL TREPPANNING
INSTRUMENTS. THEY WERE WELL KNOWN MAKERS AT 12 ST THOMAS'S STREET,
BOROUGH, LONDON. THIS SET IS RARE BECAUSE IT HAS SURVIVED COMPLETE IN
EVERY INSTRUMENT AND DETAIL, TOGETHER WITH ITS ORIGINAL MAHOGANY
CARRYING CASE.