Finch & Co



ENGLISH IVORY POMMEL CARVED WITH A GROTESQUE FACE

AN UNUSUAL ENGLISH IVORY POMMEL CARVED WITH A GROTESQUE FACE
PROBABLY FROM A DAGGER OR PISTOL
LATE 18TH CENTURY
SIZE: 7CM LONG, 3.5CM WIDE, 2CM DEEP – 2¾ INS LONG, 1½ INS WIDE, ¾ INS DEEP

LITERATURE

THE SNARLING FACE WITH OAK LEAVES CARVED ABOVE AND BELOW IS REMINISCENT OF THE WOODLAND ENTITY KNOWN AS THE 'GREEN MAN', AND IS PROBABLY DESIGNED TO BOTH PROTECT AND INSPIRE ITS OWNER. WHILST THE GREEN MAN IS OBVIOUSLY PAGAN, CARVINGS OF HIM CAN BE FOUND IN MANY CATHEDRALS AND CHURCHES. HIS ORIGINS ARE MYSTERIOUS; SOME CONNECT HIM WITH THE GREEK GOD DIONYSUS, OR THE EGYPTIAN GOD OSIRIS, BUT HE MOST PROBABLY ORIGINATES FROM THE CELTIC BELIEF OF TAKING THE ENEMY'S HEAD AS A TROPHY AND DISPLAYING THE SKULL AS A MAGICAL PROTECTOR OF A SACRED SITE AND THE COMMUNITY.