Finch & Co



FRENCH MASONIC RITUAL BANNER STAND

AN UNUSUAL FRENCH MASONIC RITUAL BANNER STAND THE QUARTERED CARVED AND PAINTED OAK BASE DECORATED WITH THE SYMBOL OF THE SKULL AND CROSSBONES, SWAGS OF LAUREL LEAVES AND ROSE BLOSSOMS
WOOD, POLYCHROME AND IRON
18TH CENTURY
SIZE: 41CM HIGH, 32CM SQUARE (BASE) – 16 INS HIGH, 12½ INS SQUARE (BASE)
98CM HIGH – 38½ INS HIGH (WITH IRON POLE)
SEE: FINCH & CO CATALOGUE NO.7, ITEM NO.123, FOR A MASONIC MINIATURE SILVER RITUAL SWORD

LITERATURE

CANDIDATES WISHING TO JOIN A MASONIC LODGE ARE REQUIRED TO CONSIDER THEIR MOTIVES IN THE 'CHAMBER OF REFLECTION' AND TO WRITE A 'PHILOSOPHICAL WILL' BEFORE THEIR INITIATION CEREMONY. THE CHAMBER CONTAINS THE MOST IMPORTANT SYMBOLS OF FREEMASONRY ESPECIALLY THAT OF THE VANITAS OR SKULL AND CROSSBONES. THE LAUREL LEAF IS SACRED TO APOLLO AND SYMBOLISES IMMORTALITY AND VICTORY IN WAR WHILST THE ROSE IS SACRED TO APHRODITE OR VENUS AND IS A SYMBOL OF LIFE AND REGENERATION. THE MYSTIC OR ALCHEMICAL ROSE IS ALSO IMPORTANT IN CHRISTIANITY AS PERSONIFIED BY THE VIRGIN AND IS SYMBOLIC OF THE LAST STAGE OF A SPIRITUAL QUEST.

IN 18TH CENTURY FRANCE THE NAMES OF THE LODGES WERE OFTEN THE SAME AS THOSE OF THE INNS WHERE THE FREEMASONS WOULD MEET AND THEY WERE FREQUENTLY THE BUTT OF JIBES BECAUSE OF THEIR CONVIVIALITY AND BANQUETING. MEETING IN THE PRIVATE DINING ROOMS OF RESTAURATEURS OR INNKEEPERS THEY WOULD TRACE SYMBOLS ON THE FLOOR WITH CHALK, USE PORTABLE EQUIPMENT AND AFTER THE CEREMONY REMOVE ALL TRACES OF THEIR MEETING, AND SIT DOWN TO DINNER.

MOZART, GOETHE AND VOLTAIRE WERE ALL FREEMASONS AND DURING THE ENLIGHTENMENT OF THE 18TH CENTURY, PHILOSOPHICAL THINKING REVOLVED AROUND THE IDEA THAT MANKIND POSSESSED A NATURAL MORALITY LINKED TO A

VISION OF AN INNOCENT AND BENEVOLENT ‘NATURE’. THE FREEMASONS STROVE TO EMBODY THE IDEA THAT MAN COULD BE A ‘PERFECT INDIVIDUAL’ AND TO REPRESENT FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, EXPRESSION AND EDUCATION.