Finch & Co



RARE COMMONWEALTH OVAL ENGLISH CEDAR WOOD HORN AND BONE INLAID TOBACCO BOX

CIRCA 1656

A RARE COMMONWEALTH OVAL ENGLISH CEDAR WOOD HORN AND BONE INLAID TOBACCO BOX DECORATED WITH THE LEGEND 'THE BEST IS NOT TOO GOOD FOR YOU' DATED '1656'

SMOOTH SILKY PATINA WITH WEAR TO THE WOOD INDICATING THE BOX HAS BEEN CARRIED IN A POCKET OVER A LONG PERIOD

17TH CENTURY

SIZE: 2.5CM HIGH, 8CM WIDE, 10CM DEEP - 1 INS HIGH, 3 INS WIDE, 4 INS DEEP

LITERATURE

E.H.PINTO IN HIS BOOK 'TREEN AND OTHER WOODEN BYGONES' STATES THAT THESE OVAL CEDAR WOOD BOXES RIMMED IN HORN AND INLAID WITH BONE… 'BELONG TO A SMALL AND RARE ENGLISH GROUP WHICH ALL APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN MADE BY ONE MAN BETWEEN 1680 AND 1710. THEY BEAR VARIED, BUT ATTRACTIVE INSCRIPTIONS AND DATES; THIS ONE (IN HIS COLLECTION) PROCLAIMS 'FOR YOU THE BEST IS NOT TOO GOOD 1706''

IF A BOX WAS GOOD FOR KEEPING THE PIPE TOBACCO FRESH IT WOULD SOMETIMES ALSO BE USED FOR SNUFF AND THEY WERE SOLD BY TOBACCONISTS FOR EITHER PURPOSE ACCORDING TO CHOICE. IT COULD ALSO HAVE BEEN TREATED AS A TABLE BOX TO BE PASSED ALONG TO FILL PIPES AT CONVIVIAL FUNCTIONS. THEY WERE SOMETIMES USED FOR A FREE DIP OF TOBACCO ON THE COUNTER OF A TOBACCONIST'S SHOP, OR AT AN INN WHERE THE LANDLORD

WOULD KEEP THE SNUFF FRESHLY RASPED, OR THE TOBACCO NICELY MOIST, ON A DAILY BASIS.

PROVENANCE

EX ENGLISH PRIVATE COLLECTION