Finch & Co





NORTHERN BRITISH TREEN ENGRAVED WOOD FOLK ART SHORT STAFF

CIRCA 1791

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DECORATED WITH FANTASTICAL ANIMALS AND BIRDS INCLUDING A SQUIRREL, HORSES, A CAT, STYLISED FIGURES, FISH, POT PLANTS, HEARTS AND TO THE 'KNOP' TWO 'SUN' FACES AND A 'MOON' FACE

YEW WOOD OR HEDGEROW WOOD

ENGLAND

DATED 1791

SIZE: 69.5CM LONG - 27¼ INS LONG

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LITERATURE

DURING THE LONG WINTER MONTHS, BEFORE THE COMING OF ELECTRICITY, THERE WAS LITTLE WORK THAT COULD BE DONE OUTSIDE IN NORTHERN BRITAIN. WOODWORKING TOOLS PROVIDED MEN WITH INDOOR WORK WHILST WOMEN SAT AT LOOMS, SPINNING WHEELS, AND DOING LACE OR NEEDLEWORK. WITH SO MANY HOURS COMPULSORILY SPENT INDOORS TIME IS OFTEN OF EVEN LESS ACCOUNT THAN MATERIAL IN CONSEQUENCE EACH MAN DEVELOPED THE PATIENCE TO CREATE FOR THE FARM AND HOME A WEALTH OF OBJECTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH HIS TASTE AND SKILL.

FOLK ART WAS A NATURAL AND UNCONSCIOUS FORM OF SELF EXPRESSION AND TRADITIONALLY THE CRAFT OF WOOD CARVING WAS A MASCULINE OCCUPATION. THE CARVING AND DECORATION OF OBJECTS SUCH AS THIS ENGRAVED WOOD STAFF WERE ESSENTIALLY LABOURS OF LOVE AND AS SUCH WERE GIVEN TO SWEETHEARTS. IN DAILY USE, THESE OBJECTS WOULD PROVIDE A CONSTANT REMINDER OF THE MAKER.