A documented James I leaded bronze twin-handled mortar, attributed to Suffolk, circa 1605

Sold



REF: 2878

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Height: 12 cm (4.7")

Diameter: 15.5 cm (6.1")

Weight: 4.185 kg

Description

The body cast to one side with a vesica-shaped bishop's seal of a saint, between the initials 'M' and 'A', a foundry mark of four crossed lines forming an eight-pointed star beside the M, the other side cast with the same seal between a cross and the initials 'M.A', all between two slender ribs, with a pair of angular lug handles.

This mortar is illustrated three times in Michael Finlay, English Decorated Bronze Mortars & Their Makers (2010), once on the front cover, again in Colour Plate 1, and lastly on p. 132, fig. 256.

The four crossed lines, forming an eight-pointed asterix-like mark, are possibly that of a founder. Finlay attributes the maker to Suffolk, and possibly to the Suffolk maker Thomas Cheese (fl.1603-1635), on the basis of its similarity to other mortars known to have been part of his output. A 17th century bronze cauldron with the same mark was found near Grantham in Lincolnshire.

Provenance: The private collections of Michael Finlay and Danny Robinson

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