An elegant Charles II turned lignum vitae wassail bowl and cover, circa 1660

Sold



REF: 4306

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Height: 33 cm (13")

Diameter: 23 cm (9.1")

Description

The shallow domed cover with concentric rings, centred by a lidded spice box and three baluster shaped finials to hold the dippers when not in use, the bowl with a low filet, on a short stem and spreading circular foot.

Provenance: H W Keil, Broadway, Worcestershire

Literature: For a comparable example see Owen Evan-Thomas, 'Domestic Utensils of Wood' (1992), p. 21, pl. 7A.

Wassail bowls were used for toasting, the name thought to be derived from the Anglo Saxon 'waes-hael' ('wass-heil' or 'was-haile') meaning 'good health', at Christmas time and also originally other important ceremonial and festive dates throughout the year. Lignum vitae became a popular choice for larger and more formal wassail bowls in the 17th century and it is suggested that they developed into something of a status symbol for well-off families. For an extensive discussion of wassail bowls see Edward H Pinto, 'Treen and other Wooden Bygones' (1969), pps. 48-52.

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