Finch & Co



A VERY RARE REGENCY CANNEL COAL URN WITH A REVERSIBLE CANDLESTICK IN THE LID, MARKED ON THE FOOT WITH A TIN LABEL OF THE MAKER: 'W MALPAS'

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CIRCA 1810-1820

SIZE: 28CM HIGH X 18CM WIDE

LITERATURE

SOMETIMES CALLED CANDLE COAL, CANNEL COAL IS A SAPROPELIC COAL COMPOSED LARGELY OF FINELY DISINTEGRATED PLANT DEBRIS. IT WAS FORMED IN STAGNANT WATER AND IS RICH IN SPORE RESIN BODIES AND LEAF CUTICLE. IT IS FOUND IN THE MINES OF NEWCASTLE AND SCOTLAND AND WAS USED FOR CARVING OBJECTS AND FOR THE VENEER OF FURNITURE. IT DOES NOT TAKE SUCH A HIGH POLISH AS JET SO WAS NOT USED IN THE MAKING OF JEWELLERY BUT IT DOES NOT FRACTURE AS EASILY AS JET SO LARGE OBJECTS COULD BE MADE FROM IT. HOWEVER, DUE TO ITS LUSTROUS BLACK SHEEN IT IS OFTEN MISTAKEN FOR JET.
IN THE LATE 18TH AND EARLY 19TH CENTURY ROBERT TOWN OF WIGAN WAS RENOWNED FOR HIS FIGURES CARVED FROM CANNEL COAL AND SOME EXAMPLES OF HIS WORK ARE IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM. IN WHITBY THE JET WORKERS SOMETIMES USED CANNEL COAL FOR COMMISSIONED LARGER SCULPTURES WHICH AS THIS URN VASE.