

A rare pair of mid-18th century walnut candlestands

Sold



REF: 10447

Height: 95 cm (37.4")

Description

The tops cartouche-shaped, one with minor repair; and one retaining original screw top, the other repaired. The fine, double-baluster turned stem over a tripod base with three elegant, cabriole legs. Excellent original colour and patina. English, third quarter of the 18th century.

Due to their utilitarian nature, surviving pairs of 18th century candlestands are rare. Although simple in design, these candlestands are extremely elegant and display excellent colour and patina.

Moveable stands to support a candlestick or lamp were intended to supplement the fixed, lighting arrangements of rooms. The fashion for decorative candlestands spread rapidly, and they were often made en suite to flank a sidetable with a mirror above, with such sets often mentioned in lists of household goods and by contemporary writers. Sheraton observed that candlestands afford, 'additional light to such parts of the room where it would neither be ornamental nor easy to introduce any other kind'. Candelabra were often placed on candlestands, and placed in alcoves and wall recesses.

The ordinary form was a plain or spiral baluster, circular or octagonal top and tripod base. A great variety of candlestands are illustrated in mid-18th century design books, many inspired by French design. Chippendale, in the third edition of the *Director* (1762) illustrates seventeen, recommending between 3ft.,6in. and 4ft.,6in. as convenient heights. No other type of furniture illustrated in the *Director* does more to justify that the author's designs were 'impossible to be worked off'. Nevertheless these extravagant conceits, somewhat modified, were occasionally executed by craftsmen to whose judgement Chippendale commits the success of the undertaking.

Candlestands of a practical nature were also designed by Chippendale and his contemporaries. The tripod base rendered candlestands particularly suitable for classical treatment, and many examples were of simple designs with elegant tops. Sheraton observed that candlestands afford, 'additional light to such parts of the room where it would neither be ornamental nor easy to introduce any other kind'. Candelabra were often placed on candlestands, and placed in alcoves and wall recesses.