HOWGEGO
HISTORIC + MODERN

A rare, late-17th century, yew, writing table

Sold

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REF: 10658

Height: 80 cm (31.5")

Width: 75 cm (29.5")

Depth: 51 cm (20.1")

Description

The plank top in three sections and faced with an ovolo moulding. The frieze faced with a single-bead moulding either side of a single drawer faced with double-bead moulding and with replaced handles and escutcheon, and cockbeading around the edge. The sides shaped and faced with cockbeading. Standing on baluster and ball turned legs joined by an x-stretcher on original bun feet. Excellent configuration, original colour and patina. The drawer lined in pine and re-run. English, fourth quarter of the 17th century. 61181126.

The importance of this piece is derived from its excellent proportion, and quality of design and craftsmanship which enhance the excellent configuration, colour and patina of the timber which is prized for its rich colour and lustrous patina. Illustrating late-17th century furniture at its height, it is sophisticated, elegant and refined, and would have been commissioned for a substantial household. The finesse of this writing table has probably served to protect it over the years as it has survived in excellent condition.

Yew trees have a very slow growth rate and it is rare to find large pieces made from this close-grained, timber. The x-stretcher and bun feet, evolved into the design of late-17th century English furniture, in response to Continental fashions. Tables especially designed for writing do not seem to have been made in England until towards the end of the 17th century when, as a result of a more affluent society and luxurious way of living, a tendency towards specialisation evolved. This piece is a very early example, of tables which began to be made for the function of reading and writing, and consequently extremely rare.

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