A documented Charles II large bronze mortar, dated 1684, made for Roger Warde by James Bartlet (fl. 1675-1700), of the Whitechapel Foundry, London

Sold

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REF: 5060

Height: 29 cm (11.4")

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Diameter: 37 cm (14.6")

Description

A band beneath the rim cast 'ROGER WARDE APOTHECARY IN YORK 1684', a decorative wide band at the waist of cinquefoil and fleur de lys, above three cord mouldings, the foot with recessed flange

Provenance: D.A. Hutton Collection

Literature: This mortar is discussed J K Crellin & D. A. Hutton, 'Communication and English Bell-Metal mortars c.1300-1850', Medical History, Vol. XVII, no.3, July 1973, Pharmaceutical History and its Sources in the Wellcome Collections Part V, p.279. The article provides a detailed survey of the extensive Wellcome Collection, classifying all the Whitechapel Foundry decorative bands. This mortar is given 'a new variation of F...a bold simplification of the previojus patterns'. It is noted as 'in a private collection'. At the time of publication it was probably slready in one of the authors' collections, namely Hutton.

This mortar is again discussed, M. Finlay, 'English Decorated Bronze Mortars and Their Makers', p. 70. A mortar, by the same maker and of similar form, inscribed 'SAMVELL STRINGER 1696', formerly in the John Fardon Collection, is illustrated ibid., p. 71, pl. 97. Samuel Stringer was a former Operator of the Apothecaries' Company, London. A further mortar, with identical decoration and inscribed 'WILLIAM TYE IN IPSWICH 1689', in the Colchester Museum collection, is illustrated p. 96.

This mortar clearly demonstrates on occasions they were commissioned from founders not local to the buyer. Manufacture in London for use in York is an impressive financial and logistical undertaking, given the weight of the mortar

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