

SA1162679

Early 19th Century Painted Pine Seaman's Chest – “Emblem of Liberty”

Price

GBP 650

| USD \$880 | EUR 761

Item Reference: SA1162679

Date of manufacture: 19th Century

Dimensions

Height = 41 cm (16.1")

Width = 92 cm (36.2")

Depth = 45 cm (17.7")

Description

A wonderfully original early 19th century Anglo American painted pine seaman's chest, the exterior in a dry, worn black paint with original iron-mounted rope beackets to each end. The tapered chest is deeper at the base to ensure stability whilst on board ship. The interior lid reveals a striking folk-art tableau: a Union Flag and British Red Ensign flanking a stylised United States shield, beneath a hand-lettered scroll reading “Emblem of Liberty”. The painting is naive yet confident, the colours softened but still vivid, and speaks of the post-War of 1812 period when Anglo-American maritime ties were both practical and symbolic. Beneath the flags two cannon face each other. Undoubtedly the work of a sailor, the interior decoration would have been a personal expression of identity, pride and political sentiment — concealed when the chest was closed, but displayed to those invited to look inside. The chest retains its original small candle/coin till to one side, and has the honest wear and knocks expected from a working piece that has travelled the world. Wear, abrasions and paint losses to exterior; interior painting bright with age-related marks and small area...

Seller Details

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