

18th-Century Gold Nativity Cameo Stick Pin

£75



Description

An exceptionally rare 18th-century gentleman's stick pin, finely crafted in yellow gold and set with a delicately carved shell cameo depicting the Nativity. Dating to circa 1770, this elegant jewel brings together the devotional subject matter, exquisite miniature carving, and refined understatement characteristic of the period.

The oval shell cameo presents the sacred scene in low relief, the pale carved layer standing in gentle contrast against its darker ground. Despite its small scale, the composition conveys the tenderness and reverence of the Nativity: a remarkable achievement of the cameo carver's art. Shell was particularly prized for such work, as its naturally layered structure allowed a finely sculpted design to emerge with subtle tonal distinction.

Mounted in a simple yellow-gold setting and fitted as a gentleman's stick pin, the piece was intended as an intimate yet sophisticated personal ornament. During the 18th century, devotional imagery, classical subjects, and sentimental motifs were frequently worn in miniature forms, giving jewellery a personal, symbolic dimension beyond its decorative appeal.

A beautiful and unusual survival from the Georgian period, this stick pin would make a distinguished addition to a collection of antique cameo jewellery, devotional objects, or 18th-century gentleman's accessories. Its combination of precious metal, intricate shell carving, and deeply meaningful subject matter gives it considerable charm and historic presence.