Combined Boot Jack & Dressing Case

Sold

Christopher Clarke Antiques
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REF: 83021

Height: 7.62 cm (3")

Width: 30.47 cm (12")

Depth: 6.98 cm (2.7")

Description

A mahogany Boot Jack with brass feet stamped 'Johnston, 68 Cornhill', which is extremely unusual for being fitted to its interior as a small Dressing Case.

The Jack is naturally a little larger and squarer in shape to accommodate its contents which consist of a pewter box, a shaving brush, a cutthroat razor, a strop, a toothbrush and a pair of boot pulls. The steel pulls are hinged to form a cross when opened and have additional tools such as a corkscrew, screwdriver, hook, scoop, drill bit and eyelet cutter.

The strop is made of boxwood with a leather sleeve and the toothbrush (which is stamped Silver) and shaving brush are made of bone. The steel razor, which is possibly a replacement, is stamped with a crown above GR and 'Champion'. The pewter box has a cracked mirror to the underside of the top and a compartment with slide lid to one side.

To use the Boot Jack a long pin is pushed through a hole that runs through the two halves to prevent their hinges opening. To close it, there is a fixing hook and a small lock with key and replaced escutcheon.

The retailer was Robert Johnston, a perfumier and chemist long established at 68 Cornhill who also had premises at 15 Greek Street. Johnston was born in 1787 and is believed to have died in 1854 or 55 with adverts of those dates noting him as recently deceased. The earliest record we have found for him at Cornhill is 1802 with his business carrying on for a few years after his death. As his main business was a chemist and perfumier it is likely that he bought this boot jack in for sale or perhaps commissioned the different parts for its assembly. It is intriguing that the toothbrush is stamped Silver as the well-known camp equipage and travel outfitters S.W. Silver were his next door neighbours for 20 years.

This is a rare form of Boot Jack for its combination with a Dressing Case and has added interest for the fact that it was sold by a chemist. Circa 1845.

Closed size is given.

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