Emmett & White
ANTIQUES & INTERIORS

French Provincial Whale Oil Rush Lamp, Dated 1791

£95

Emmett & White Ltd
Cross House, Waterloo Square, Alfriston, East Sussex BN26 5UD
01323 870 595 • info@emmettandwhite.com • emmettandwhite.com

REF: 7570

Description

A rare and evocative French provincial wall-hanging rush lamp, dated 1791. Made at the close of the 18th century, this wonderfully practical object offers a direct connection to domestic life in pre-Revolutionary and Revolutionary France, when simple oil lamps provided the essential light of the household.

Designed to be hung on the wall, the lamp would have burned whale oil, a widely used illuminant before the development of gas and electric lighting. Its form reflects the honest utility and restrained beauty of provincial craftsmanship: an object made for daily use, yet possessing a sculptural quality shaped by its purpose, materials, and age. The suspended construction allowed the lamp to bring light into a kitchen, passage, workshop, or farmhouse interior while keeping the flame safely elevated.

The engraved date of 1791 gives this piece particular historical resonance. It was made during one of the most turbulent and transformative years in French history, lending an added layer of interest to an object otherwise rooted in the quiet rhythms of rural and domestic life.

Now more than two centuries old, the lamp retains a compelling presence. Its aged surface, hand-worked character, and functional form make it an exceptional decorative object as well as an important survival of early lighting history. Displayed in a kitchen, library, hall, or country-house interior, it would bring warmth, authenticity, and a strong sense of place.

A highly unusual and atmospheric example for collectors of antique lighting, French provincial furniture and accessories, folk art, or 18th-century domestic objects. Please refer to the photographs for condition, dimensions, and details of the dated inscription.

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