

THE LIMNER COMPANY



FRENCH SCHOOL (18th century)

Boxwood Roller Print with royal arms, hunting scenes, and military emblems

Boxwood

Cylindrical, 73 mm (2 3/4 in.) in length

This intricately carved roller print in boxwood presents a rich interplay of heraldic, martial, and hunting imagery. The main cylindrical body is decorated in relief with continuous friezes of stylised crowns, fleur-de-lis, oak leaves, and florets. Below runs a vivid hunting scene: a coursing lévrier pursuing deer, alongside birds in flight, rabbits in cover, and a fortified tower firing cannons, encapsulating both courtly sport and military symbolism.

One terminal is carved with the arms of France — three fleurs-de-lis under a royal crown — encircled by the chain of office of the Order of Saint Michael, affirming the dynastic and monarchical identity of the piece. The opposite end bears a cartouche with the initials N P above a cannon and military trophies, framed by foliage, further embedding martial associations within the design.

Rollers of this type were used to impress designs into dough or sugar paste for festive and commemorative cakes, their motifs embedding royal and religious iconography into domestic ritual. The combination of heraldic arms, Passion symbols, hunting, and martial scenes reflects the close interconnection of monarchy, faith, and everyday life in ancien régime France.

Comparable examples are published in Edward H. Pinto, *Treen and Other Wooden Bygones* (London, 1952), fig. 186 and p. 187, where French 18th-century roller prints are discussed. Notably, Pinto records examples stamped Guillaume A. Gorge, 1747 and Josephe Mignon, 20 Janvier 1748, offering rare evidence for identified makers of such carved tools.