



# PERIOD OAK ANTIQUES

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## **THE SACKVILLE STONE LEOPARDS. KNOLE HOUSE, KENT. CIRCA 1605-1608.**

THIS FINE PAIR OF EARLY 17TH CENTURY STONE LEOPARDS WOULD HAVE MOST PROBABLY SAT ON THE GABLES AT KNOLE HOUSE, KENT, REPRESENTING THE SACKVILLE COAT OF ARMS. THOMAS SACKVILLE 1ST EARL OF DORSET BOUGHT THE LEASE ON KNOLE HOUSE IN 1570, BUT DID NOT LIVE THERE UNTIL 1604, WHEN HE REMODELLED THE HOUSE AND STAIRCASE, ADDING THE LEOPARDS TO BOTH THE STAIRCASE AND GABLES. THROUGHOUT THE 19TH CENTURY REPAIRS AND RENOVATIONS TO THE STONework TOOK PLACE, HENCE THIS PAIR BECOMING AVAILABLE.



The two leopards that frequently appear at Knole, on either side of the Sackville crest, are known as supporters and only knights and aristocrats were entitled to use them on their personal heraldry. Exactly why the leopard was chosen is not known but, like lions, they symbolise rank, status and power. Thomas Sackville, 1st Earl of Dorset, became Lord Buckhurst in the 1560s and the use of the leopard probably dates from this time. The leopard may be connected to the Sackville family link with the Boleyns, namely Anne Boleyn, and through her, to Queen Elizabeth I. The royal connection was a familial link of which the Sackvilles were undoubtedly very proud and wanted to adorn all over Knole. The Great Staircase was entirely remodelled by Thomas Sackville between 1605 and 1608. It formed a key stage in the formal procession of the family and their guests from

the Great Hall to the state rooms on the first floor. The architecture and decoration was heavily influenced by the Renaissance revival of the classical orders and the carved leopards, holding heraldic shields in their paws, are a symbol of the family's power and prestige. However, you can still see leopards carved, engraved and painted throughout your visit to Knole. Stone leopards sit proudly on the gables of the roof, look down on visitors from the large screen in the Great Hall and watch from the stained glass windows of the Great Staircase.

PROVENANCE: PURCHASED FROM A PRIVATE WEST COUNTRY COLLECTION.

31" HIGH and 30.5" HIGH.

stock no 1566.

**SOLD**

**Dimensions:**

**Height: 31 inches (78.7 cms)**

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