

MACKINNON

FINE FURNITURE



Gillows

A GEORGE III MAHOGANY BUREAU CABINET

circa 1750-60

The cabinet bears the coat of arms and motto of the Langton family and was most certainly supplied to Thomas Langton (d. 1802) at the time he was rebuilding Ash Tree House in the mid-18th century. The cabinet can be attributed to the Lancaster-based Gillows, based on stylistic attributes and a connection with the Langton family.

This cabinet showed marked similarities to the Sudley cabinet that once belonged to a branch of the Blundell family from Halsall, near Ormskirk. (S. E. Stuart, *Gillows of Lancaster and London 1730-1840*, Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2008, vol. II, pp. 20-21). The mouldings on the doors have similar shaped corners and the interior construction of the doors is likewise similar, also to the Inman clothes press, made for the West Indies merchant, Mr Charles Inman (Stuart, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 49). The interior of the fall front is almost identical to that of a bureau in The Judge's Lodgings Museum, Lancaster (Stuart, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 261), a piece which bears the label of 'John Lowther Lancaster maker'. Lowther is recorded as being, by 1759, in partnership with Robert Haresnape, Robert Gillow's ex-partner.

The distinctive Corinthian pilasters relate closely to those on a clothes press supplied in 1761 to Ralph Bell of Thirsk Hall, Yorkshire (Stuart, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 52-53) whose capitals were carved by James Townson. The broad proportions of the piece, high quality timber and scalloped outline of the pediment all support a Gillows attribution. Furthermore, Thomas Langton's firm, Langton, Birley & Co. in Kirkham are noted as having approached Gillows in 1786 regarding the purchase of Riga oak (Stuart, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 156) confirming the family's association with the firm.

Attributed to Gillows.

A magnificent George III mid 18th century mahogany bureau secretaire cabinet. The scrolled broken pediment carved with sunflowers framing a centrally mounted parcel-gilt carved armorial crest, above a pair of beautifully figured moulded panel doors in turn flanked by fluted pilasters with superbly carved Corinthian capitals. The doors opening to reveal a fitted interior of drawers, pigeon holes and folio slides. The lower section with a fall front opening to reveal additional drawers and pigeon holes as well as secret document holders with gilt lead capitals. With three graduated drawers with extremely rare solid silver handles and escutcheons, and raised on ogee bracket feet.

The carving possibly by James Townson. The silver handles bearing the marks of Thomas Wallis, London.

Literature:

Mallett & Son (Antiques) Ltd., *Catalogue - 2010*, pp. 29 - 31

S. E. Stuart, *Gillows of Lancaster and London 1730-1840*, Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2008, for comparisons

Height: 7' 6¹/₂" in (229 cm)

Width: 4' 0" in (122 cm)

Depth: 2' 0" in (61 cm)

Stock Number

AD.174

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