MACKINNON
FINE FURNITURE



A GEORGE III MAHOGANY JARDINIERE

England, *circa* 1760

This outstanding carved mahogany jardiniere or wine cooler, of diminuitive scale, appears to be part of a larger suite of furniture with identical blind fretwork comprising at least sixteen dining-chairs, two pairs of stools and a pair of card tables - which were almost certainly supplied to George Weller-Poley for Boxted Hall, Bury St. Edmunds in Suffolk in about 1760. George Weller-Poley, the only son of Elizabeth Poley of Boxted Hall and Robert Weller of Tunbridge in Kent, inherited the estate in 1751 at the age of 41. The chairs were sold by the Trustees of the J. H. Weller-Poley Will Trust; Christie's London, 3 July 1997, lot 20 (£375,500).

Weller-Poley family tradition suggests that the suite had been at Boxted Hall for many generations. No family papers survive to provide any details on the commission and a possible maker, although the quality of the timber and the outstanding carving supports an attribution to a leading London maker. The 'Chinese' fretwork on the legs takes inspiraton from the pattern books published by Thomas Chippendale, Ince & Mayhew and Robert Manwaring.

The fretwork's most unusual feature is the carved bell design incorporated into the fretwork pattern. Manwaring's *The Cabinet and Chair-Maker's Real Friend and Companion* (1765), plate IV illustrates a design for a 'parlour' chair with a square leg headed by a bell; additionally, the splat and top-rail are designed in the same tradition as the Weller-Poley chairs. Plate XII shows designs for two 'Chinese Chairs', one of which has Chinese fret carved legs with bells. These are the only known chair designs of the period with bells carved to the legs.

In 1762, Ince and Mayhew published their *Universal System of Household Furniture* which includes a plate showing designs for card-tables, one of which is carved with variations of chinoiserie fret ornament (pl. LII). Tables featuring the same fretwork design and almost certainly from the same workshop include: a side table illustrated in G. Beard and J. Goodison, *English Furniture 1500 - 1840*, London, 1987, p. 135, fig. 5; a pair of serpentine card tables sold Christie's New York, 12 April 1996, lot 169; another serpentine card table from Earl Howe's collection at Gopsall Hall, Leicestershire illustrated in M. Harris & Son, *Antique Furniture and Works of Art*, London, n.d. (*c.* 1930), p. 49.

SOLD

A truly exceptional mid 18th century George III period carved mahogany jardiniere or wine cooler in the manner of Ince & Mayhew. Of diminutive scale, of square form, with blind fretwork carved decoration on the top edge and canted corners, the sides with pierced Gothic detailing and magnificent gilt brass carrying handles, above arch-shaped pierced spandrels and magnificently carved blind fretwork square chamfered legs with leather castors. Fitted with a later brass liner.

The mahogany of superb colour and patina.

The carving of the very finest quality throughout.

Height: 1' 9" in (53.3 cm)
Width: 1' 1" in (33 cm)
Depth: 1' 0³/**I**" in (32.4 cm)

Stock Number
V03.37

5 Ryder Street - St James's - London, SW1Y 6PY
Phone: +44(0)20 7839 5671 Mobile: +44(0)7725 332 665
Email: charlie@mackinnonfineart.com Web: mackinnonfineart.com