

The Calke Abbey Dinner Plates. An important set of twelve George II Dinner Plates made in London in 1741 by the Royal Silversmith, George Wickes.

Sold



Description

The Dinner Plates are of shaped rectangular form and display a raised rim which is decorated with an applied gadrooned band. The border of each plate is finely engraved with a contemporary Armorial surrounded by a cartouche of drapery mantling. The plates are in excellent condition are of a thick gauge and have a very good colour. Each plate is very well marked on the reverse and is, in addition, engraved with its number within the dinner service and its original scratch weight. From the numbering this must have been a very extensive dinner service. The Armorial is that of Harpur (with a baronet's badge) impaling Manners. They are specifically those of Sir Henry Harpur, 5th Baronet, (24th June 1708 - 7th June, 1748), English baronet and politician. He was the eldest son of Sir John Harpur, 4th Baronet, of Calke Abbey, Derbyshire, and his wife Catherine, daughter of Thomas Crew, 2nd Baron Crew. He was educated at Brasenose College, Oxford. Harpur was a Tory Member of Parliament (MP) for Worcester from 1744 to 1747, and for Tamworth from 1747 until his death in 1748, aged 40. He married Lady Caroline Manners, daughter of the Duke of Rutland. He was succeeded in the baronetcy by his second eldest surviving son Henry. His daughter, Caroline, married the Scottish MP, Adam Hay. In 1753, his widow, Lady Caroline married Sir Robert Burdett, 4th Baronet. A portrait of William Aikman (1682-1731) is shown of the 5th Baronet. Diameter: 9.5 inches, 23.75 cm. Weight: 229oz, the set.

CALKE ABBEY Calke Abbey is a magnificent Grade I listed country mansion near Ticknall, Derbyshire, now in the care of the National Trust. The site was an Augustinian Priory from the 12th century until its dissolution by Henry VIII. The present building, named Calke Abbey, was never actually an abbey, but is a Baroque mansion built between 1701 and 1704 by Sir John Harpur, 4th Baronet. The house was owned by the Harpur family for nearly 300 years until it was passed to the National Trust in lieu of death duties.

THE ROYAL SILVERSMITH GEORGE WICKES George Wickes was apprenticed to Samuel Wastell and had workshops in Pantons Street, Haymarket London when these exceptional plates were made. Wickes was appointed to Frederick, Prince of Wales and the first ledger details a list of distinguished clients amongst others, The Duke of Devonshire and Chandos, Dowager Duchess of Norfolk, Marquess of Caernarvon, Earl Inchiquin and many "Lords". In the next volume he adds the Dukes of Kingston, Roxburgh, Montrose and Bridgewater, the Earl's of Scarborough, Kildare and others, Admiral Vernon and Arthur Onslow, the Speaker of the House of Commons. The account book of Frederick Prince of Wales commences on 24th March, 1735. Frederick had been living at quite some extravagant rate and in September 1737 he had been banished to Kew Palace. The most important piece in the Royal Collection by George Wickes is a beautiful Epergne designed by William Kent. There is little doubt from 1735 onwards Wickes' clientele was as large and important (if not possibly more so) than the great Paul De Lamerie.