

A Magnificent George III Tray made in London in 1808 by William Bennett.

Sold



Description

This exceptional Tray has a broad rectangular form and stands on four cast feet, with scroll end, gadrooned rim and raying shell motif. The raised gadrooned rim of the main body is decorated with grapevine flanked shells, at intervals, and the cast handles display detailed fruiting vine designs. The centre of the Tray is engraved with a contemporary Armorial, with Crest above and Motto engraved on a banner below. The engraving has been executed to the finest standard and is surrounded by a pluming scroll cartouche. The Tray is in excellent condition and is of a quite outstanding weight. The Armorial, Crest and Motto are those of Beaumont impaling Wilkes, for Sir George Howland Beaumont, 7th Bart, D.C.L. F.S.A 1753-1827. He was M.P. for Bere Alston 1790-1796. He married Margaret daughter of John Willes of Astrop, Oxon, and granddaughter of Sir John Willes, M.P. and Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas. Beaumont played a crucial part in the creation of London's National Gallery by making his first bequest of paintings to that institution. He was born in Great Dunmow, Essex, and was the only surviving child of the landowner, Sir George Beaumont, 6th Baronet, from whom he inherited the baronetcy in 1762. He was educated at Eton College, where he was taught drawing by the landscape painter Alexander Cozens. Beaumont became a frequent exhibitor at the Royal Academy from 1794 to 1825, eventually earning a reputation as the leading amateur painter of his day. The Beaumonts purchased Coleorton Hall in Leicestershire which was rebuilt to a design by George Dance the Younger from 1804 to 1808. He was a founding member of the British Institution in 1805 and on a visit to Italy in 1821 he met with Antonio Canova and also purchased the Taddei Tondo by Michelangelo, which he later donated to the Royal Academy. He died at Coleorton Hall in 1827 and is buried in the church there. William Bennett was apprentice to both John Arnell and John Perry and entered his first mark on 1st June 1796. He had workshops at 19, Little Bartholomew Close when this tray was made. His mark appears chiefly on trays and salvers in which he seems to specialise. His work is nearly always of very fine quality, as is seen with this tray. Length: 28 inches, 70 cm. Width: 20 inches, 50 cm. Weight: 208 oz.