

Finch & C^o



A PRIVATE COLLECTION OF CANTONESE FAMILLE ROSE DECORATED ARMORIAL PORCELAIN

A PRIVATE COLLECTION OF CANTONESE FAMILLE ROSE DECORATED ARMORIAL PORCELAIN MADE FOR THE SWEDISH FAMILY OF JAMES KEILLER
CIRCA 1910
VERY GOOD CONDITION THROUGHOUT, MEASUREMENTS, INVENTORY AND DETAILED REPORT ON REQUEST
(A TOTAL OF 145 PIECES)

LITERATURE

MADE ON THE ORDERS OF JAMES KEILLER IN 1910 THIS SERVICE TOOK THREE YEARS TO MAKE IN CANTON AND MOST PROBABLY CELEBRATES THE MARRIAGE OF JAMES KEILLER TO ALICE LYON. ON THE REVERSE OF THE THE MAJORITY OF PIECES THERE IS AN INSCRIPTION 'ALICE OCH JAMES KEILLER. CANTON 1910 (OR 1913)', TOGETHER WITH THE REIGN MARK OF THE EMPEROR XUANTONG.

ALTHOUGH THIS SERVICE WAS MADE FOR THE SWEDISH MARKET, THE GOTHENBURG FAMILY OF KEILLER IS OF SCOTTISH DESCENT ORIGINATING FROM DUNDEE. AS WITH MANY SCOTSMEN ESCAPING THE POLITICAL UPHEAVALS OF THE 18TH CENTURY THEY BUILT BUSINESSES IN SWEDEN WHILST KEEPING CONTACT WITH SCOTLAND WHICH IS BUT A SHORT DISTANCE FROM GOTHENBURG.

THE SWEDISH EAST INDIA COMPANY WAS FOUNDED IN 1731 WITH THE HELP OF A SCOTSMAN, COLIN CAMPBELL, AND IT APPEARS THAT MANY 18TH CENTURY CHINESE ARMORIAL PORCELAIN SERVICES WERE ORDERED BY THE SCOTS THROUGH THE SWEDISH EAST INDIA COMPANY IN GOTHENBURG. SERIOUS RIVALRY EXISTED BETWEEN THE ENGLISH HONOURABLE EAST INDIA COMPANY AND ITS SWEDISH COUNTERPART AS A RESULT OF THIS LUCRATIVE BUSINESS AND IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT DURING THE 18TH CENTURY TWICE AS MANY SCOTS ORDERED ARMORIAL SERVICES TO BE MADE IN PROPORTION TO THEIR POPULATION IN COMPARISON TO THE ENGLISH.

IN 1797 ALEXANDER KEILLER WITH A BUSINESS PARTNER, WILLIAM GIBSON, BUILT A ROPE WORKS IN GOTHENBURG. LATER, IN THE 19TH CENTURY, KEILLER EXPANDED ON HIS OWN INTO TEXTILE MACHINERY AND ENGINEERING, EVENTUALLY BECOMING THE LARGEST SHIPBUILDER IN SWEDEN.

IN 1905 HIS DESCENDENT JAMES KEILLER OBTAINED ROYAL PERMISSION TO RECOVER PORCELAIN FROM A WRECK THAT HAD SUNK IN GOTHENBURG HARBOUR IN 1745 CARRYING BLUE AND WHITE CHINESE PORCELAIN FOR THE SWEDISH EAST INDIA COMPANY. RATHER LIKE THE LATER MUCH PUBLICISED 'HATCHER CARGO', HE SALVAGED 4360 PIECES OF PORCELAIN FROM THE WRECK OF THE SHIP 'GOTHENBURG'. A REPLICA OF THIS SHIP IS CURRENTLY BEING BUILT IN SWEDEN AND WILL SET SAIL FOR CHINA LATER IN 2004.

THE CREST OF JAMES KEILLER ON THIS SERVICE IS MENTIONED BY DAVID HOWARD IN VOLUME II OF HIS CHINESE ARMORIAL PORCELAIN AND IS 'OUT OF A MURAI CORENET A LION'S HEAD' WITH THE MOTTO 'FORTITER ET CELERITER'.