Finch & Co



A VERY RARE ROMAN MICRO MOSAIC PANEL OF A COMIC ACTORS MASK IN 18TH CENTURY FRAME

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1ST CENTURY BC/AD

THE CENTRAL ORIGINAL MOSAIC PANEL WITH 18TH CENTURY RESTORED MARGINS USING ANCIENT TESSERAE FROM THE SAME SITE

SIZE: 29CM X 26CM

LITERATURE

THE HON. REV. DAWNAY CAME FROM A FAMILY OF GRAND TOUR COLLECTORS. IN THE 'DICTIONARY OF BRITISH AND IRISH TRAVELLERS IN ITALY 1701-1800' BY JOHN INGAMELL HIS FATHER IS MENTIONED.

THE SITES OF ROME, POMPEII AND HERCULANEUM WERE 'DE RIGUEUR' FOR GRAND TOURISTS AT THE END OF THE 18TH CENTURY. LARGE PRINT FOLIOS WERE COMMISSIONED FROM ARTISTS AND PUT TOGETHER DEPICTING THE WALL PAINTINGS AND MOSAICS FOUND AT THESE SITES AND AMONGST OTHER SOUVENIRS MICRO MOSAICS BEGAN TO BE MADE AT THIS TIME COPYING THESE ANTIQUE IMAGES.

THERE IS A MOSAIC FROM THE VILLA OF CICERO AT POMPEII FROM THE 3RD CENTURY BC IN THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NAPLES SHOWING A SCENE FROM THE

GREEK NEW COMEDY. THE FINE QUALITY IS COMPARABLE IN SHOWING THE ANCIENT MOSAICISTS SKILL IN HANDLING MINUTE PIECES OF COLOURED STONE TO IMITATE THE EFFECTS OF PAINTING.

MUCH LATER IN THE 19TH CENTURY AS AN EXTENSION OF THIS ANCIENT ART EXQUISITE TABLE TOPS AND PLAQUES WERE PRODUCED DEPICTING THE CLASSICAL SITES, AND WERE AVIDLY SOUGHT AFTER AND COLLECTED BY THE CROWNED HEADS, ARISTOCRACY, AND EMERGING NOUVEAU RICHE OF EUROPE. THERE STILL EXISTS TODAY A STUDIO IN THE VATICAN PRODUCING AND RESTORING MICRO MOSAICS.

WE CAN ONLY IMAGINE HOW MUCH MORE MEMORABLE AND EXCITING IT MUST HAVE BEEN FOR THE HOM. REC. DAWNAY TO HAVE OBTAINED THE GENUINE ARTICLE WHILST ON HIS 18TH CENTURY GRAND TOUR.