Finch & Co



ENGLISH NEO CLASSICAL CARVED IVORY OVAL STEMMED SWEETMEAT SALVER

AN UNUSUAL ENGLISH NEO CLASSICAL CARVED IVORY OVAL STEMMED SWEETMEAT SALVER
CIRCA 1790 – 1820
SIZE: 7CM HIGH, 17.5CM WIDE, 15.5CM DEEP - 2¾ INS HIGH, 7 INS WIDE, 6 INS DEEP

LITERATURE

IN 1800 ROBERT SOUTHEY NOTED THAT IN LONDON THE DRAWING ROOM WAS 'THE COMMON PLACE FOR BANQUETING OR OF EATING THE DESSERT'. HE REPORTED THAT DRY SWEETMEATS SUCH AS CONSERVED FRENCH PLUMS, APRICOTS AND ALMOND BISCUITS WERE PREPARED BY A MEMBER OF THE HOUSEHOLD KITCHEN STAFF EXPERIENCED IN THE ART OF CONFECTIONERY FOR SOCIAL OCCASIONS, OTHERWISE A PROFESSIONAL CONFECTIONER WAS ENGAGED. AFTER FINISHING THE EARLIER COURSES THE GUESTS WOULD MOVE TO THE DRAWING ROOM WHERE THE DESSERTS WERE DISPLAYED IN ALL THEIR COLOURFUL MAGNIFICENCE. THEY WERE NOT SEATED, BUT CONVERSED AS THEY STOOD OR STROLLED ABOUT IN THE MANNER OF A MODERN COCKTAIL PARTY. HORACE WALPOLE, WRITING IN 1758 REFERRED TO A BANQUET ATTENDED BY THE PRINCE OF WALES AT WHICH 'EVEN ON THE CHAIRS WERE SALVERS AND PYRAMIDS WITH CANDIED FRUIT SUCKERS, COMFITS, ORANGE CHIPS, STRAWBERRIES AND CHERRIES.' A SMALL TOP SALVER HAD A LARGE PRESERVED FRUIT AT ITS CENTRE.