Finch & Co



MRS ANNE MEE (1770 - 1

A FINE PORTRAIT MINIATURE ON IVORY OF GEORGINA LATOUR BY MRS MEE (ABOUT 1770 - 1851)

CIRCA 1808

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(ABOUT 1770 - 1851)

INSCRIBED ON PAPER TO THE REVERSE IN AN EARLY 19TH CENTURY HAND: 'GEORGINA LATOUR. BORN DAUGHTER OF JOSEPH FRANCIS LOUIS LATOUR ESQUIRE OF HEUCHSTONE PARK, BEDFORDSHIRE – PARTNER IN COUTTS' BANK. 1796 - 1868

MARRIED – EDWARD MARJORIBANKS OF EWDEN AND GREENLANDS, COUNTY OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE – PARTNER IN COUTTS' BANK. FOURTH SON OF EDWARD MARJORIBANKS OF HALLYARDS AND LEES – 1808

DIED – APRIL 1849

PAINTED BY MRS MEE 1808'

OIL ON IVORY, ORIGINAL GILT FRAME

ENGLISH

CIRCA 1808

SIZE: 10CM HIGH, 7.5CM WIDE – 4 INS HIGH, 3 INS WIDE / 23.8CM HIGH, 21.5CM WIDE - 9⅜ INS HIGH, 8½ INS WIDE (FRAMED)

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LITERATURE

MRS ANNE MEE WAS BORN ANNE FOLDSONE, THE DAUGHTER OF JOHN FOLDSONE WHO EARNED A LIVING AS A PICTURE COPYIST IN OXFORD MARKET, LONDON. IT IS SAID THAT AT AN EARLY AGE SHE HELPED HER FATHER BY MIXING HIS PAINTS AND PREPARING HIS CANVASES FOR HIM AND THAT AT TWELVE YEARS OF AGE SHE WAS A PUPIL OF THE PORTRAIT PAINTER GEORGE ROMNEY. HOWEVER, WHEN HER FATHER DIED IN 1784 SHE WAS OBLIGED TO LEAVE THE FRENCH LADIES SCHOOL IN WESTMINSTER WHERE SHE HAD SHOWN AN APTITUDE FOR MUSIC, POETRY AND PAINTING AND EARN A LIVING IN ORDER TO SUPPORT HER MOTHER AND EIGHT BROTHERS AND SISTERS.

HER PORTRAIT PAINTING BECAME MUCH ADMIRED AND SHE HAD NO DIFFICULTY IN OBTAINING A DISTINGUISHED CLIENTELE, AND UNDER THEIR PATRONAGE SHE CONSEQUENTLY CAME TO THE NOTICE OF GEORGE IV. FROM 1790 - 1791 SHE WORKED AT WINDSOR CASTLE AND A NUMBER OF HER MINIATURES REMAIN IN THE ROYAL COLLECTION. BY THIS TIME SHE WAS SAID TO BE SO MUCH IN DEMAND THAT IT WAS NOT ADVISABLE TO PAY FOR A MINIATURE IN ADVANCE! INDEED, BY 1804 SHE WAS CHARGING FORTY GUINEAS FOR A SINGLE PORTRAIT.

IN 1793 SHE MARRIED JOSEPH MEE OF MOUNT ANNA, COUNTY ARMAGH BY WHOM SHE HAD SIX CHILDREN BY THE TIME SHE WAS THIRTY-THREE. MRS MEE DID NOT ABANDON HER PROFESSION UPON HER MARRIAGE DESPITE THE FACT THAT HER BARRISTER HUSBAND FORBADE HER TO PAINT THE PORTRAIT OF ANY MAN. SO GREAT WAS HIS JEALOUSY THAT HE DECREED 'LADIES ONLY' AND THAT THEY WERE NOT TO BE ACCOMPANIED INTO THE STUDIO BY GENTLEMEN.

SHE EXHIBITED AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY FROM 1804 - 1837 AND IN 1814 COMPLETED AN IMPORTANT COMMISSION FOR GEORGE IV TO PAINT A SERIES OF LARGE MINIATURE PORTRAITS OF FASHIONABLE COURT BEAUTIES. SHE DIED AT THE GREAT AGE OF 81 IN HAMMERSMITH ON 28TH MAY 1851.

ALTHOUGH SHE WAS A PUPIL AND PROTÉGÉ OF ROMNEY THERE IS A TRACE OF COSWAY IN HER TECHNIQUE, WHICH WAS SOMETIMES LACKING IN DRAFTSMANSHIP. HER WORK CAN BE OF AN UNEVEN QUALITY AND VARIES A GREAT DEAL. HOWEVER, THIS MINIATURE IS A PARTICULARLY FINE EXAMPLE OF HER WORK.

PROVENANCE

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