

ELIZABETH GODFREY - An exceptionally rare pair of George II Ten Sided Serving Dishes made in London in 1743 by Elizabeth Godfrey.

Sold



Description

The Dishes are unusually decorated with a band of raised arch work, the first time we have seen this unusual design. The centre is engraved with an Armorial surrounded by a Rococo cartouche of scrolls, shell details and floral sprays, typical of the 1740's. The Arms are those of Drane impaling Panting. The Dranes apparently hailed from Yorkshire, but became widespread, including Ireland and North America.

The Panting Arms were granted in 1600 to Robert Panting, Alderman and Sheriff of Dublin. The Dishes are fully marked on the reverse with a full set of crisp marks. Elizabeth Godfrey, also known as Eliza Godfrey and Elizabeth Buteux, was an English gold and silversmith. She has been called "the most outstanding woman goldsmith of her generation". She was the daughter of the famous Huguenot silversmith, Simon Pantin, and was trained in his workshops. Despite obvious success as an artist in her own right Godfrey married twice, both times to silversmiths with whom she shared her business in London.

In 1720 she married Abraham Buteux. After his death eleven years later, Godfrey began to run the firm on her own. She later married Benjamin Godfrey, who is believed to have been in her employ. He died in 1741, at which point she again began to head the business by herself, a period in which her firm's skill at producing increasingly popular Rococo aesthetics garnered loyal clientele. Until recently, Godfrey was thought to have been active until 1758. However, recent research has revealed that she was active until at least 1766. This was a period when many women traders were active in London, and the luxury trades were a sector in which they were particularly successful. Her works were known for their high quality and innovative sophisticated style, shown with these dishes. Godfrey described herself on her trade cards as "Goldsmith, Silversmith, and Jeweller, [who] makes and sells all sorts of plates, jewels, and watches, in the newest taste at the most reasonable rates." Her patrons included a number of nobles and their families—notably H.R.H The Duke of Cumberland. Her work was influenced by French Huguenot traditions of silversmithing and is the most sought after of the George II Lady Silversmiths. A copy of her trade card is attached, which is now in the British Museum. Diameter: 10 inches, 25 cm. Weight: 32oz, the pair.