



18th Century Antique

A superb quality George III Irish chimneypiece of neoclassical design in variegated Jasper and white statuary marbles, circa 1775. See following page for provenance and further details.

Dimensions

Height 64¼in (163.2cm) width 76¼in (193.7cm)

Internal height 49½in (125cm) width 50¾in (128.9cm)

Footblock to footblock 72½in (183.4cm)

Shelf depth 6in (15.2cm)

Reference

G280

Provenance and further details

Mount Panther Estate, Downpatrick, N. Ireland and thence to Arborfield Garrison, Bailleul Sergeants' mess, Reading, Berkshire. The estate with house (it is not known who originally built it) was bought in 1772 by Francis Charles Annesley (1740-1802), 2nd Viscount Glerawly, 1st Earl of Annesley (1789) who remodelled the house and grounds, introducing a pleasure ground, Parkland and commissioned the chimneypiece. The house and estate buildings are now in a ruinous state after the architectural features including of course the chimneypieces were salvaged and the roof was removed in the late 1960s to avoid paying rates on the property.

The one piece shelf with uppermost a concave moulding enriched with fluting above a cyma moulding decorated with lamb's leaf. The frieze centred with a rectangular tablet which rests on the architrave, sculpted with a winged Cupid (love) holding his bow and an arrow being rearmed with a quiver of golden arrows by two attendants within a fruiting laurel wreath, framed by Jasper mounts. This is flanked by panels of Jasper in statuary frames and supported by a white moulding decorated with lozenge, four sided diamond shaped leaves and flanked by the end blockings decorated with circular medallions depicting confronted Sphinx (guardian and repository of arcane wisdom) sentinels on pedestals upheld by drapery swags knotted in the middle these are supported by the architrave of white marble with well carved elliptical ovals centred with open flowers and inlaid fluted dentils. The pilaster shaped jambs of tapering white shafts decorated with tiered swags of bell flowers and graduated drops terminating in calyx upheld by tied bows and linen drapes supported from swan neck flower heads. These are surmounted with tripod shaped, rams headed pedestals on a dark jasper background on which stand young classically clad gardeners gazing at each other; one leans on a hoe the other a garden rake, vividly exploiting the polychromatic effects of the vibrant colours of Jasper on white marble. The opening with simple moulded edge the whole raised on blocks. No doubt the symbolic decoration echo the Viscount's love of flowers and gardening.



Original register grate in steel, provenance as above.