

SA1076620

A very rare Scottish mahogany chest of drawers by William Deans of Melrose, c.1835

Price

Sold

Item Reference: SA1076620

Date of manufacture: 19th Century

Dimensions

Height = 128 cm (50.4")

Width = 125.5 cm (49.4")

Depth = 53.5 cm (21.1")

Description

A fine and commodious chest with a previously unrecorded label* Possibly a distant relative of the famous Edinburgh and later Charleston, South Carolina cabinet maker Robert Deans (1721-1781)**. William Deans may have served an apprenticeship with James Mein of Kelso, an adjacent town less than 15 miles from Melrose. The quality of the construction and timbers can be compared with the work of Mein, and interestingly their trade labels are similar. This chest may have originally belonged to Lt. Colonel Thomas Ogilvy of Islabank, now Ruthven House, Forfarshire and his wife Lady Henrietta Ogilvy, daughter of Thomas William Fermor, 4th Earl of Pomfret. That an unknown maker had clients of this social standing adds further weight to Deans originally serving as a senior wright in a firm elsewhere and adopting, or being recommended by them when he set up business independently, perhaps when James Mein senior died in 1830. It is also testament to the quality of his work. Mein's patrons included the Earls of Haddington and the Dukes of Roxburghe. William Deans is listed in Pigot & Co.'s National Commercial Directory as having premises in Market Place, Melrose in 1837. *As far ...

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