



A WILLIAM IV PERIOD OCCASIONAL TABLE

Dimensions: H: 30 in / 76 cm | Dia: 22 in / 56 cm

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A William IV Period Occasional Table

With a Maltese Specimen Marble Top
attributed to J. Darmanin & Son

Additional literature available

Constructed from rosewood, the table supported on a tripartite base; the feet of a very unusual carved scallop shell motif with hidden castors, the tapering column support with egg-and-dart collar and acanthus leaves detail supporting the circular top housing an Italian specimen marble top, its central roundel depicting the famous Doves of Pliny, surrounded by a band of lozenge and oval shaped marble cartouches, the outer reserve of Portor marble.
English and Italian, circa 1835

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Known as the Capitoline Doves or The Doves of Pliny, this group of birds was frequently depicted in micromosaic and precious stone during the 19th century. The image derives from a Roman floor mosaic that was discovered in 1737 at Hadrian's Villa in Tivoli, and is believed to be a copy of a lost ancient Greek mosaic at Pergamon which was famously described by Pliny the Elder.

Literature:

J. Darmanin & Sons of Malta

The renowned 'Marble Workers Darmanin' were Malta's leading marble craftsmen in the 19th century. They excelled in creating 'Monumental and Mosaic Slabs and other Decorative Artworks,' notably mosaic table tops primarily for export. Founded by Giuseppe Darmanin (later stylised as Joseph) around 1800, their work was cherished by British tourists like Sir Moses and Lady Montefiore, who visited Valletta during their Levantine Grand Tour in the 1830s.

Darmanin's impressive marble mosaic tables gained international acclaim through several international exhibitions from 1851 to 1886. Notably, a table currently exhibited at Buckingham Palace was presented at the Crystal Palace in 1851, where the Darmanins were awarded a prize medal. In the 1862 London Exhibition, among seven showcased tables, one featured a captivating design: 'a vase and four doves.' A related table, ordered from Darmanin in 1841, is in the permanent collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum in London.