

A FINE OCTAGONAL LIBRARY DESK BY HENRY SAMUEL OF LONDON

Dimensions: H: 31 in / 78 cm W: 57 in / 145 cm D: 54 in / 137 cm

9995

Butchoff Antiques, 154 Kensington Church Street, London, W8 4BN
T: 00 44 (0) 20 7221 8174 info@butchoff.com www.butchoff.com



Constructed in a well figured mahogany, adorned with applique rocaille scroll work rising from foliate carved and shaped plinth inset feet, the pedestals separated by reeded stiles capped with inverted scallop shells; four cupboards at the angles, each with shaped fielded panels, with carved shells at the quadrants, and having two banks of four cock beaded drawers, with stylised swan neck handles. The stiff leaf carved thumbnail moulded edged top having an inset tooled morocco leather. The apron having two diametrically opposed long drawers, with hinged quarter drawers, all with conforming brasses. Stamped to the pedestal 'H. Samuel, 484 Oxford Street W'.
English, circa 1890

Another example, previously with Butchoff Antiques, illustrated and discussed in Christopher Payne's 'British Furniture 1820 - 1920: The Luxury Market' p. 412, fig. 8.60, alongside other examples of the London firm's output.

Literature:

Henry Samuel (fl. c.1882-c.1906)

Originally from Timberhill, Norwich, Henry Samuel was a furniture maker and dealer who specialised in earlier Georgian style pieces. He is recorded at his London address at 484 Oxford Street by 1882, as listed in Kelly's Directory of that same year described as "dealer in works of art." In 1899, he received a royal visit to his galleries displaying "objets d'art and vertu." As discussed by Christopher Payne in "British Furniture 1820 to 1920," the firm's diversity and extent of their output included not only Georgian mahogany furniture, but also japanned furniture, Hepplewhite style pieces, and satinwood furniture. In addition to art and furniture, H Samuel's business is also listed as a bookseller in 1906, a testament to his business acumen and success at the heart of London's shopping district. Championing the taste in revival styles at the turn of the century, Samuel's premises must have been a fashionable mecca where he showcased his goods, decorative items, alongside books, curiosities, and fine art. His mahogany furniture often showcases applied carved elements, features which could be altered on a bespoke basis for different clients. Many of his pieces bear the stamp on the carcass or drawers, with interiors and linings often stained darker to lend them a "Dickensian" air.

The desk is based on a desk acquired by George IV for the Octagon Library at Buckingham Palace, then Buckingham House.