The Property of a Gentleman

83 A prince standing in a rocky wilderness (identified as the land below Nagar Citadel); Ishkimb Shah seated on a palace terrace; two illustrations from a dispersed historical manuscript, Deccan, perhaps Bidar, circa 1709; two drawings in colours and gold on paper, margins ruled in black and gold. Identified in Persian on the protection sheet (22) miniatures 19.3 by 9.6cm pages 21 by 11.2cm.

These two illustrations were probably part of a large project on the history of the Qutb Shahi dynasty of Golconda. A group of illustrations in a similar format and stylistically related are known, including three in the collection of the late Edwin Binney, 3rd, now in the San Diego Museum of Art: (see Binney 1973, nos. 148a, b and c, one in the collection of the Custodia Foundation, Paris and another in the Rietberg Museum, Zurich (see Zebrowski 1983, nos. 197-198 and Caldin 1991, p. 47, no. 46, where references to further illustrations are noted). Although most are identified on the verso with the name of members of the Qutb Shahi dynasty of Golconda, the example in the Rietberg Museum shows a mythological scene and is therefore very unlikely to be from the same series. Thus, as pointed out by Zebrowski, these miniatures may have been standardized production of a Deccani workshop involved with both historical Muslim and Hindu projects. Zebrowski attributes to this same workshop a fine Ragamala series (see ibid., p. 236-37, nos. 199-203).

€4,000-6,000
€6,300-9,400

The Property of a Lady

84 Eight illustrations from a Ragamala series, Deccan, Hyderabad, circa 1760; gouache with gold on paper, mounted double-sided on four album leaves, text above in nasta’liq in red and black ink, wide borders of orange paper (4) miniatures 25 by 17.7cm, album pages 36.3 by 25.3cm.


€4,000-6,000
€6,300-9,400

The Property of a Gentleman

86 A pair of portraits depicting Shah Tahmasp Safavi and Karim Khan Zand respectively, India, Pahari, 19th century; gouache with gold on paper, inner blue border decorated in gold with birds among vine wreaths and floral motifs in colours and gold respectively, spandrel pink border ruled in red, outer yellow border, each identified in nasta’liq script on the verso, a protection sheet glazed along upper edge (2) miniatures 13.3 by 9.5cm with borders 25 by 20.5cm.

€3,500-4,500
€5,500-7,100
The Property of a Lady

88 A Satyr Tragopan (Tragopan satyr), from the Impey series of natural history watercolours.
Company School; Calcutta, c.1777-82
watercolour on European (Whitman) paper, framed
54 by 47,2cm.
Provenance:
Sir Elijah Impey (1732-1809) and Lady Impey; his sale, Phillips, 21st May 1830.
The animal and bird drawings made for Lady Impey between 1777 and 1783 are among the earliest and
without doubt the finest of natural history illustrations made for the
British in India. Sir Elijah Impey was appointed first Chief Justice in
Bengal in 1774 following the new
Regulating Act which called for the
establishment of law courts in
Calcutta. When Sir Elijah left for
India with his wife Mary they took
their household with them,
including servants and a moonshoe
from whom Sir Elijah could learn
Persian. He set about collecting
manuscripts and miniatures almost
immediately, having his personal
Persian collector's seal cut within the
year. But it was his wife, bound to
the house by family duties and
frequent child-birth, who
collected exotic creatures in the
garden of their Calcutta house,
which must have become a veritable
menagerie. From 1777 she employed
Shaykh Zayn al-Din to record the
flora and fauna in a true-to-life style,
satisfactory to the eighteenth-century
passion for recording new species.
Zayn al-Din came from Patna where, it
can be assumed, he had been
trained in the Mughal techniques of
miniature painting. After these years
Zayn al-Din was joined by two
Hindu painters, Bhawani Das and
Ram Das, both also from Patna. The
project continued until Impey was
recalled to London in 1783, by
which time a total of 326 drawings,
197 of them birds, had been
completed.
Examples from the Impey series of
natural history drawings are today in
the collections of the Victoria and
Albert Museum, London, the
Wellcome Institute, London, the
Radcliffe Science Library, Oxford, the
San Diego Museum of Art and in
private collections.
The Satyr Tragopan is a large bird of the pheasant family, growing to
around 75cm. It inhabits the moist forests of rhododendron and
deciduous trees with dense
undergrowth, which cover large areas of the Himalayas.

Another version of the Satyr
Tragopan, by Ram Das, was
formerly in the collection of the
Linton Society, sold in these
rooms 10th June 1963, lot 30.

For illustrations of others of the
Impey series see M. and W.G.Archer,
Indian Painting for the British,
Oxford, 1953, figs.44-47;
S.C. Welch, Rooms for Winter, New
York, 1978, nos.6-9; T. Falk and G.
Hypen, Birds in an Indian Garden,
London, 1984; S.C. Welch, India, Art
culture 1300-1900, New
York, 1985, no.281; B.N.Goswamy
and E. Fischer, Wonders of a Golden
Age, Zurich, 1987, no,109; sales in
these rooms 10th June, 1963, lots 1-
64 (the Linton Society group); 29th
April, 1992, lot 1; 23rd
October, 1992, lots 492-494; 22nd
October, 1993, lot 229; 24th April
1996, lot 67.
£15,000-20,000
€23,500-31,400

87 A Book of Fables, illustrated and
illuminated Persian manuscript on
date with twenty-five miniatures.
India, probably Deccan, 19th
century
29 leaves, 10 lines per page written in
two columns of natural ink in black
text on gold-ground buff paper, headings written in red, double
intercolumnar rules in black and gold,
one illuminated headpiece, 25
miniatures, wormholes, incomplete,
later red morocco binding erroneously
stamped 'Khudia we Dimin' 25,5 by 14,7cm.
Although the text of this manuscript
has not been identified it appears to
contain a set of fables as related by a
sage to his pupil. The illustrations
include five of the sage and his pupil
in conversation. Others depict
different animals (including snakes,
elephants, butterflies and a dragon)
as well as maidens and noblemen in
various courtly and outdoor scenes.
£2,000-3,000
€3,150-4,700
89 A group of fourteen Sikh and Hindu Zamindars of the Punjab, attributable to Ghulam Ali Khan, Company school, Delhi or Patiala, c.1817
gouache with gold on paper, each figure identified in small Persian characters in black ink, black and gold borders, framed, reverse of frame with label dated 1928 giving English transliterations of the names 26.8 x 38cm.

£ 20,000-30,000
€ 31,400-47,100

Provenance:
Produced in northern India, probably at Delhi or Patiala, perhaps for a friend of William Fraser or Colonel Skinner, c.1815-20
On the reverse of the frame is a label which gives the English transliterations of the names of the characters depicted, and the following interesting information:

"The above translations were made by Mr Wilkins of the British Museum… 9th October (19)28… from John H. Gambier, print seller of 54 Buckingham Gate, London, SW1"

From this we may deduce that the picture had, at some stage—presumably around the 1920s—belonged to both Lionel de Fornika and Mr Gambier. This is interesting because the majority of pictures by Ghulam Ali Khan and the small group of artists associated with the Fraser Brothers and Colonel Skinner remained in their original albums until relatively recently. Only a small handful seem to have been separated, including two closely related to the present work which were in the collection of Brigadier General Arthur Howard Pryce Harrison around 1900 (see sale in these rooms 28th April 1992, lots 254-5). Three signed works by Ghulam Ali Khan depicting Nawab Abd al-Rahman Khan of Jhagarh have also appeared on the market separate from any associated album (see sale in these rooms 17th June 1999, lot 58, and Haldin 1991, nos.16-17).

The present work depicts a group of local chieftains of the area around Patiala and Ambala in the Punjab. They are identified as follows (from left to right):

Kaur Singh, an inhabitant of Lahore
Mian Singh Zamindar, an inhabitant of Malanaur
Ram Jai
Chand Singh, an inhabitant of Patiala
Diwan Gopal Singh, an inhabitant of Patiala
Gopal Singh, an inhabitant of Patiala
Jhar Singh
Jazir, an inhabitant of Nabi Kaur
Bhikhu Singh Zamindar, an inhabitant of Ambala
Kapur Singh, an inhabitant of …. (illegible)
Bhurji Singh, an inhabitant of Mian...
Narayan Singh
Khan Singh Zamindar, an inhabitant of Lahore
Chanda Singh

The picture relates closely to five works attributed to Ghulam Ali Khan painted for William and James Fraser around 1817. All five depict various courtiers or servants of the Raja of Patiala. Of the five one depicts two characters who are also present here (Gopal Singh and Ram Jai) and one shows two figures with very similar physical features, and sitting in identical poses, to the two main figures in the present picture (Jazir Singh and Bhikhu Singh). In the Fraser picture the two are labelled as Jij Singh Jai and Bhikhu Singh of Bhandar (not Ambala).

The five Fraser pictures are illustrated in Archer and Fall: 1989, nos.16-17,102-4, pp.39,41,114-5, and four were illustrated in the catalogue of the sale of the Fraser pictures in our New York rooms, 9th December 1989, lots 133-5 and 185.

For further information on the Fraser album and related artistic aspects see Archer and Fall 1989.
The adoption of the bevelled style of decoration in the early Islamic period led to some of the most successful and beautiful achievements in the history of Islamic decorative arts. The abstraction of classical foliate forms in this manner made its way into many different media, including stucco, wood and painting, and eventually to other parts of the Islamic world. This capital exhibits a version of bevelled-cut decoration that is very closely comparable to that on two capitals of similar form from Raqqa published by Herrfeld (Herrfeld 1923, pl. XXIV).

Raqqa was an important fortified stronghold throughout the Umayyad period, but the idea of creating a new city there is often credited to the Abbasid caliph al-Mansur (EI, vol. VIII, p. 410-11). It was his son, al-Mahdi, who implemented this plan from 771-2 onwards. This new city, called al-Rafika, was constructed about 200m to the west of al-Rakka taking the recently completed residential areas of Baghdad as its model. Taken together, al-Raqqa and al-Rafika formed the largest urban area in Syria and northern Mesopotamia after Baghdad. Hence, it was deemed a suitable choice for Harun al-Rashid as his new capital. He moved in 796, staying till 808, during which time he constructed for himself and his family a huge palace complex to the north of the city. This caliphal residence was almost ten kilometres square and is the most likely source for this capital and the following two lots. An excavation of Raqqa was carried out between 1949 and 1956 under the direction of Nasib Salibi with further work undertaken later by the German Institute of Damascus directed by M. Meinecke.

Property from a Private English Collection

90 A rare bevelled-style alabaster capital
Raqq a, Syria, 8th/9th century
of square section tapering to a circular base, each corner with a projecting element in the form of a coiled palmette, deeply carved throughout with a design of interlocking and interconnecting stylised foliate motifs
29.5cm
£25,000-35,000
€39,200-55,000
91 A small alabaster capital probably from Raqqah, Syria, 8th/9th century
in the form of an eight-pointed support on a projecting band above a
truncated cone, each corner with a projecting coiled palmette (some
now missing), decorated on each face with a different design in deep relief
variously with motifs of serrated leaves, curved ribbons, split
palmettes and a cross
2.35 cm.

The appearance of a Christian symbol on a capital from Raqqah is in keeping
with the history of religious tolerance in this city in the early Islamic
period. The classical city was conquered in 639 or 640 by the
Muslim army under 'Ubayd b. Ghannum (AL. vol VIII, p. 41). The
inhabitants concluded a deal with the victorious general stipulating that
the Christian residents should retain their places of worship though not
build new ones. The non-Muslim community is generally believed to
have thrived there well into the Middle Ages. There is even evidence that
a Bishop resided in the city till the twelfth century. Four monasteries
are mentioned in sources including
Dhari Zalda, which has been
identified with the excavated ruins
on the Tell al-B'ina.
£10,000-15,000
€13,700-20,500

92 A fragmentary alabaster capital probably from Raqqah, Syria, 8th/9th
century
the fragmentary form formerly of a
broad band of square section
descending to a truncated cone, each
corner with a coiled palmette
projecting beneath the upper band,
decorated in deep relief with a
continuous design of intertwining
palmettes and paired split-palmettes
27.2 cm.

The style of this capital takes the
same classical motifs as for 90 but
remains them as recognisable forms. It
reminds of a capital from Raqqah
illustrated by Herrfeldt (Herrfeldt
1925, plate XXIV). This style
provides much of the stimulus for
architectural and other decoration of
later Islamic dynasties such as the
Fatimids and Spanish Umayyads.
£18,000-12,000
€23,500-16,800
93 A Fatimid marble jar-stand (kilja)
Egypt, 12th century
of cylindrical form with a rectangular trough standing on four horn-shaped feet, each separated by pointed arches, the three sides and four concave recessed corners decorated with carved panels of bold trefoil motifs
£7,500-
94 A large green glass flask
Persia, 8th/9th century
globular form with a narrow neck and lipped rim, applied with three loop handles each impressed at the base with circular calligraphic medallions containing three lines in an angular kufic
Inscriptions:
Each handle base with a medallion stamped with:
The work of Abu Jafar...

The importance of this glass flask lies not only in its completeness but also in its size and condition. A flask of comparable form, said to have been found in Persia, is in the collection of the British Museum, though it is plain and thus lacks the handles and stamped makers’ marks (Pinder-Whiston 1968).

A group of closely related handles were excavated at Nishapur (Krüger 1995, pp. 102-103, nos. 143-147). The stamp is pressed into the molten glass after it has been attached to the body of the vessel. The scarcity of examples suggests that this was an unusual technique. The practice of stamping vessels in the early Islamic period was a continuation of a Sassanian tradition, though the pre-Islamic stamps adopted images such as birds and winged horses.

The Nishapur examples are either in a colourless glass or a glass tinged with green. They each carry one, two or three lines of Arabic, either cursive or i'flīc, and those which have been deciphered have names. This would suggest that they do not follow a practice found in Egyptians of marking vessels with official names (Morton 1985, p.31).

The stamped handles from Nishapur gave no clue as to the type of vessel to which they might have been attached (Krüger 1995, p.100). The completeness of this flask establishes with certainty that this form was one of those to have had such maker’s marks applied. As such, it is not only a beautiful and substantial example of early Islamic glass, but also one of great historical significance.

£35,000-20,000
€23,500-31,400

£7,800-11,000

Other Properties
95 A Mamluk marbled glass bottle
Egypt or Syria, 13th/14th century
the body of flattened globular form
resting on a splayed foot, the narrow
neck tapering toward a broad everted
rim, the green glass with trailed
designs in white, iridescence
10.3 cm.
£3,000-4,000
€4,700-6,300

96 A rare Mamluk marbled glass
arsenopile
Egypt or Syria, 13th/14th century
of characteristic forms, the purple
glass with trailed decoration in
white, iridescence
8 cm.
£3,000-4,000
€4,700-6,300

97 A Mamluk mosaic-work wall panel
Egypt, circa 15th century
the panel in the form of three pairs
of spandrels, each pair enclosing a
pointed arch, the mosaic-work
decoration composed of marble and
coloured stone sections forming
gemetric designs
223.5 cm.
The panel forms part of a typical
Mamluk domestic interior. It is said
to have come from a palace in Cairo
dating from the reign of Qanshay
(reigned 1468-1496) along with a
fountain with similar decoration.
The latter was sold through these
rooms, 26th April 1993, lot 111.
£8,000-12,000
€12,600-18,800
98 A pair of lion-shaped gold earrings
Persia, 12th century
composed of two symmetrical sections joined along the length, with collar and neck applied to one end, the animal pel of small circular twisted wires, granulation around the neck, the facial attributes also of twisted wire, the eyes hollow apart from one which is stone-set, lacking suspension loops (2)

This rare pair of gold earrings closely compares in composition, size, shape and decoration to the pair now in the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington (Art 1985, pp. 74–76, No. 7). The note to this example refers to four other pairs (one in the Berlin Museum of Islamic Art and three in the Biror Collection, Saint Thomas, Virgin Island) all likely to have been produced in a same workshop as this example.

£3,000-4,000
€4,700-6,300

99 A collection of twenty-one Islamic hardstone seals
Circa 9th-16th century
variously shaped, the seals variously of jasper, sugal, cornelian, amethyst, quartz and silver, incised with kufic or curvilinear script (21)

The group includes seals with both religious invocations and personal names. Of particular interest is the green hardstone seal which has the form of a medallion surmounted by a trefoil motif. This has the name of Mansur ibn Ali and both its form and quality suggest that its owner was a member of the Royal family. Another carries the name of Sultan Alband. It may be the seal of one of the descendants of Alband, the last Aq-Quyunli ruler. Another Alband was the son of Iskander of the Qara Yossuf line.

£3,000-3,500
€4,700-5,500

100 A Timurid or Sultanate hardstone pendant
Persia or India, circa 15th century
of triangular form, carved in relief on all sides, one face with a radiating design of four palmettes enclosed with four trefoil floral motifs and further trefoil forms reserved on a hatched ground, the reverse with similar motifs forming a symmetrical design, the edges carved with interlocking trefoil motifs, the upper corner later carved with an aperture, later metal loop

The pendant projects a tremendous sense of strength and robustness. It is an unrecorded form in hardstone carving but the decoration draws on recognisably Timurid motifs. The radiating design of four palmettes within four trefoil motifs can be seen on the front of the carved wooden box of Ulugh Beg, now in the Topkapi Saray (Washington 1989, p. 342, no. 49). It is a motif also appearing in manuscript illumination and on metalwork (ibid., p. 101, no. 57). On the latter, it frequently appears on a cross-hatched ground which suggests that a metalwork piece may have provided the direct model to the craftsman responsible for working this stone. The flimsy leaves along each of the edges do not appear to have parallels in Timurid art and seem to have more of an Indian sense to them. The combination of Timurid and possibly Indian elements could suggest a Sultanate origin for the piece.

£5,000-8,000
€9,400-12,600