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An 'Ashford Marble' Amphora Vase



PRICE

£5,000.00

PLACE OF ORIGIN

Derbyshire

PERIOD

Circa 1840–1860

MATERIAL

Ashford black limestone ('Ashford marble')

DIMENSIONS

H42 cm

DESCRIPTION

Derbyshire, circa 1840 - 1860

After the Antique, carved and turned body with twin handles at the neck.

Provenance: James Graham-Stewart, London from whom purchased by Emma Hawkins, London

Ashford 'marble' is in fact a type of limestone which, when polished, turns a deep glossy black. It is produced from only two quarries near Ashford-in-the-Water, Derbyshire. The 1851 Great Exhibition catalogue states that "the material from the Duke of Devonshire's quarries..."

The material proved popular as a building material and as early as 1580, Bess of Hardwick commissioned a chimney piece for Chatsworth. The connection with the family Cavendish family and the Dukes of Devonshire was always present and in the 18th century it was a popular material for ornament. It was not until the 19th century that it really became fashionable as a material for

both ornaments and furniture, promoted by William Spencer Cavendish, 6th Duke of Devonshire who studied Minerology.

The material was perfectly suited to emulate the Etruscan style painted terracotta vases which were a huge source of influence on Regency neoclassical design and inspired figures like Thomas Hope, whose famous interiors at Duchess Street housed a vast collection of antique vessels.

A number of similar Derbyshire black marble vases were exhibited at the 1851 Great Exhibition, including works by Selim Bright who was listed in BUXTON, DERBYSHIRE - MANUFACTURER showing 'Black marble vases, exhibited for size, colour, polish and finish. The handles are carved out of the solid marble'. The pieces shown "are worthy of attention for the admirable colour and surface of the material, and the masterly workmanship bestowed upon them....-a very handsome specimen." Whilst the Bright name is suggested as the manufacturer, I think it more like that he was the retailer; his premises being in the fashionable Crescent in Buxton. (<https://www.chrishobbs.com/horatiobrightfamily.htm>)

PROVENANCE

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