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Edward Farrell (- 1850)

A Magnificent Royal Pair of Figural Candlesticks made for the Duke of York

Silver

London, 1823

Maker's mark of Edward Farrell

The architect and retailer Kensington Lewis

Height: 29.4 cm, 11.6 in

Weight: 3,420 g, 109 oz 18 dwt

Modelled in turn as a gesturing man and woman with draped chased loin cloths sitting astride cast alligator bases on orb feet. The figures in both support a cornucopia stem chased and adorned with floral elements surmounted by a drip pan of chased shells, the candle socket formed as four dolphins interspersed with foliate flourishes.

This superb pair of candlesticks formed part of a massive table garniture ordered by the Duke of York through the architect and retailer Kensington Lewis, whose trade card proudly presents him as 'Silversmith and Jeweller to his R. H. the Duke of York'. The Duke of York was Lewis' most important patron and his business suffered greatly after his death.

Other pieces by the silversmith Edward Farrell, one of the royal suppliers to King George IV, for this service include a silver-gilt candelabra centrepiece in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London [M.22:1 to 7-1999].

Artist description:

Farrell's apprenticeship or freedom are unrecorded, and his early life is relatively unknown. Holden's Triennial Directory of 1805-7 described him as a silversmith, but his first mark was not registered until 1813. The most productive period of Farrell's career coincided with his association with the entrepreneur, silversmith, and jeweller Kensington Lewis, whose most important patron was Frederick, Duke of York. Lewis was supplied with extravagant sculptural plate in a variety of revival styles by Farrell, drawing principally on seventeenth-century Flemish, German and Italian designs in high relief. Lewis' business was unable to recover from the death of the Duke of York in 1827, and Farrell no longer had the opportunity to make the plate on such a grand scale. Thereafter, he was best known for highly embossed tea services chased with decoration derived from seventeenth-century Dutch genre painting.