



Bruce Talbert for Gillow and Co. – Walnut Amboyna Ebonised Gilt Bedroom Suite

Ref: NPV000388

Price on Application

MAKER	Gillows
DESIGNER	Bruce James Talbert
PERIOD	Aesthetic Movement , 1880-1889
YEAR	1880
ORIGIN	United Kingdom
MATERIALS	Walnut
DIMENSIONS	H: 81.89 in (208.01 cm) W: 81.89 in (208.01 cm) D: 22 in (55.88 cm)
CONDITION	Good

About this piece

Bruce Talbert (1838–1881) for Gillow & Co.

A rare and important walnut, amboyna, ebonized, and gilt bedroom suite, each with differing carved rosettes. Comprising: a triple mirror door wardrobe (208 cm high, 208 cm wide, 58 cm deep); a pair of bedside lockers (85 cm high, 38 cm wide); and a pair of single bedsteads (124 cm wide).

Corresponds exactly to the ones made by **Gillow** for the Midland Grand Hotel at St Pancras Station in London. See *Arts and Crafts Furniture* by John Andrews, printed by The Antique Collectors' Club, ISBN 1-85149-483-9, page 37, for a comparable sideboard.

Provenance

The famous Argentinian writer and suffragette Victoria Ocampo (1890–1979), bought from her estate and shipped back from Argentina.

Bruce Talbert originally trained as a carver and then an architect, and he became an influential and very successful furniture designer. He served an apprenticeship in Dundee and had his own carving business for two years, where he learned the skills to apply carved details to furniture, and then joined the architectural offices of Charles Edward.

In 1856, he moved to Glasgow and worked for the architects W. N. Tait and Campbell Douglas. He moved to Manchester in the early 1860s, where he gained employment with the cabinetmakers Doveston, Bird, and Hull, which was short-lived, then moved to Coventry, gaining work with Skidmore's Art Manufactures.

In 1863, he won the competition to design the masthead for *The Building News* and in the mid-1860s moved to London, where he started designing furniture for **Holland & Sons**. His "Pericles" Gothic sideboard was displayed on their stand at the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1867, where it was the Grand Prix winner.

It was at this point that his most prolific period began and also when he started designing furniture for **Gillows** of Lancaster in 1868. In the same year, he published his very influential first book *Gothic Forms Applied to Furniture, Metal Work and Decoration for Domestic Purposes*, which he dedicated to George Edmund Street.

This was followed in 1876 by *Examples of Ancient and Modern Furniture, Metalwork, Tapestries and Modern Furniture*, and in 1881 by *Fashionable Furniture*. Other companies he designed for were Marsh, Jones and Cribb, Jackson and Graham, and for a short time, he was a partner with **Daniel Cottier**.

He designed textiles for Templeton's, Warner's, Cowlshaw, and Barbour and Miller; carpet designs for Templeton's and Brinton and Co.; and his wallpaper designs were printed by Jeffrey & Co. He also designed church metalwork and furniture for **Cox & Sons**, cast iron for the Colebrookdale Co., Nichol & Co., Barbone and Miller, and Cowlshaw.

In 1869, Talbert returned to London to work as a prolific and successful freelance commercial designer and decorator.

Wardrobe

Height: 82.5"/208 cm

Width of cornice: 81.5"/208 cm

Depth of cornice: 24"

Beds

Height of headboard: 51"/129.5 cm

Height of footboard: 32"/81 cm

Width of all: 41"/104 cm

Bedside cupboards

Height: 35"/85 cm

Width: 1'5"/35 cm

Depth: 1'5"/35 cm

Circa 1880s.