



**799. Group of 4 Wallpaper Panels**

China, Kangxi Period (1662-1722), c. 1710/1720

Height: 225 cm

Width: 84 cm

Four large rare wallpaper panels depicting river scenes with boats with landscapes in the fore and background. The scenes are those of Canton seen from the South West. In the foreground is the large island of Honam (Honan), that formed the south bank of the river. The city surrounded by walls can be seen in the background in the top part of the panels. The recognisable landmarks are clearly defined, including the Smooth Pagoda, the Flowery Pagoda and the Dutch Folly fort in the river – whose walls enclosed a temple. There are junks and sampans sailing on the river, as well as docked. On the far back, in front of the city walls, are waterfront buildings supported by piles. Amongst these buildings the Western merchants would have found a Hong to store their goods and receive their senior personnel. These panels would have been intended for the export market.

By repute, the family say that they had previously belonged to Edmond Neil's father in law, William Rutter Bailey. He was known to have a substantial collection of Chinese export porcelains inherited from an older cousin Mrs Elizabeth Starkey (d.1839) of Norton, Stockton-on-Tees, Durham. Mrs Starkey was the daughter of a master mariner, probably involved in the China Trade, and these rolls of wall paper may well have derived from this source.

**Provenance:**

- William Rutter Bailey (1813-1879) of Cotford House Sidbury Devon (Edmond Neals father in Law)
- By Descent from Edmund Neal CIE (1841-1933), Secretary Public Works Department, India Office, UK. r
- Sotheby's London, 2007

**Literature:**

Published

Patrick Connor, The Hongs of Canton: Western merchants in South China 1700-1900 as seen on Chinese export painting, London, 2009, p27-29, pl.2.5

