



**A fine and imposing silver model of the Kalas Mahal section of the Chepauk palace Chennai (Madras)
POA**

A fine and imposing silver model of the Kalas Mahal section of the Chepauk palace Chennai (Madras). The model stands on an ebony base containing a drawer, with silver handles and applied silver armorial with inlaid green glass to denote the windows. The model is inscribed above the two main windows 'CHEPAUK PALACE MADRAS' and there is a further inscription 'THE OLD RESIDENCE OF THEIR HIGHNESSES THE LATE NAWABS OF CARNATIC', the armorial plate is also inscribed 'H.H. THE PRINCE OF ARCOT G.C.I.E'

This impressive object, dating from c.1917 is a fine and detailed model of the central pavilion of the Chepauk palace, the historic official residence of the Nawab of Arcot (the Carnatic Sultanate) from 1768 to 1855.

The palace c.1905 showing the central pavilion.

The Carnatic Sultanate emerged in the late 17th century as an important dependency state of the declining Mughal Empire gaining effective independence in 1710. The Sultanate controlled a vast area south of the Krishna river and through the 18th century there was increased contact with both the French and the English as they sought to expand their influence on the sub-continent.

The original capital was at Gingee before moving to Arcot in 1710 and finally to Chepauk (Madras) in 1768. Arcot was to become the name most associated with the Sultanate and the rulers are invariably referred to in English as the Nawabs of Arcot. They allied to the British and eventually in 1801 the Sultanate became a Princely State under the British East India Company largely as a result of the growing dependency on the Company's resources of money and manpower.

In 1855 the last ruler Ghulam Muhammad Ghouse Khan died with no male heir, the claim of his uncle was put aside by the British authorities and the State was annexed by the British under the doctrine of lapse. The uncle, Azim Jah, was created the first Prince of Arcot (Amir-e-Arcot) in 1867 by Queen Victoria and granted a tax-free pension in perpetuity.

Following the move of the capital from Arcot to Chepauk, the Nawab Muhammed Ali Khan Wallajah decided to construct a new palace. He was closely allied to the British and employed a British engineer, Paul Benfield, to design and construct the new residence. The building is known for its intricate carvings, wide arches, red bricks and lime mortar and is one of the first buildings of the Indo-Saracenic style to have been built.

The palace now comprises two blocks named the Kalas Mahal and Humayun Mahal. The Kalas Mahal was the official residence and is the earliest part of the palace and the area the model represents. The Humayun Mahal, the northern block, was virtually rebuilt between 1868 and 1871 to incorporate a new records office and Revenue Board.

Following the death of the last Nawab the palace was auctioned to pay off his debts and was eventually purchased by the Madras government. Serving as a records office and centre of the Revenue Board it also housed the Civil Engineering College, its use continuing throughout the period of British rule. Its scale is truly impressive, being built over an area of 117 acres surrounded by a wall but it has sadly fallen into decay in recent years.

The applied silver armorial, representing the Prince of Arcot, is inscribed 'H.H. THE PRINCE OF ARCOT G.C.I.E' and this would indicate Khan Bahadur Sir Ghulam Muhammad Ali Khan (1882-1952), the fifth prince of Arcot who was raised to the rank of Knight Grand Commander of the Order of the Indian Empire (G.C.I.E) in 1917. The exceptional craftsmanship exhibited on the model, with the very fine detailing of the architectural elements, suggests the model was perhaps created as a gift to the prince on his elevation to this rank and as a fine reminder of his ancestral home.

Origin	Asian
Period	Early 1900s
Style	Other
Condition	Excellent
Dimensions	H:40cm W:47.6cm

Antique ref: 10017