Four Poster Campaign Bed by Butler

Thomas Butler

Sold

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REF: 6644

Height: 231 cm (90.9")

Width: 193.5 cm (76.2")

Depth: 107.5 cm (42.3")

Description

Many makers concerned themselves with designs for four poster field beds at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th century, including Sheraton, Hepplewhite, Chippendale and Gillows. However, probably the most recognized manufacturer of such beds was Thomas Butler of Catherine Street, London. British Campaign Furniture by Brawer illustrates several designs by the different makers as well as examples by Butler. Butler boasted in his adverts of his 'Patent Brass - Screw Bedsteads' that they were 'In Every Respect Superior To All Others'. This was partly to do with his ongoing public battle with his neighbours and former employees Morgan and Sanders, who made similar beds but he also has the right to boast of the quality of his work. As can be seen this bed breaks down neatly for travel but gives a very elegant single bed when assembled.

The main timber used is mahogany with the frame in oak. The posts and legs are turned with the front posts decorated with a reeded baluster which is shallow fluted to the base. The back posts are typically plainer in look and originally would have held a head board. Butler offered his beds with either a wooden lath base or a roped sacking base to support a mattress, which is what this bed would have had. The brass finials to the canopy top serve as both elegant decoration and fixings for the hinged frame. The brass maker's plate gives the details of 'Butler Patent Catherine Street' and the lack of a street number suggests the bed was made before Morgan and Sanders set up in competition in 1801.

This bed is now in the collection of The National Trust of NSW and can be viewed at Old Government House, Parramatta.

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