



Christopher Clarke Antiques

**Dealers in Campaign Furniture
& Travel Items**

'Imperial' Dining Table

Thomas Butler

REF: 6508

Height: 74 cm (29.1") Width: 183 cm (72") Depth: 69 cm (27.2")

Sold



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This Georgian, Cuban mahogany Dining Table is of a type known as the 'Imperial'.

The design of a table with ends that could be pulled apart and loose leaves inserted on the extending rails was first patented by Gillows in 1800 and given the name 'Imperial'. Other makers such as Thomas Butler and Morgan and Sanders advertised 'Imperials' with their designs based on Gillow's. The Morgan and Sanders table illustrated in British Campaign furniture shows an engraved handle with clip above that is the same as the two end clips on this table. The clips release the D end top sections held to the frame by brass fittings. Once the D ends are removed access is allowed to the two extra leaves stored within the boxed frieze, to extend the table surface. The legs are removable and all but two are fitted with brass bolts. The other two have wooden threads and fit to the middle of the table as extra supports and so would not need to be as strong as the others. The slender turned legs are an inverted baluster shape and reeded, with fluting to the top.

Although there is no maker's name there are some pointers that suggest possible workshops. Both Butler

and Morgan and Sanders are known to have used a reeded edge to their table tops and frieze rails, like this table. The leg design is also similar to those made by Butler and Gillows. The fact that the table is not marked may also be a clue. If made during the time of the great rivalry of the Catherine Street makers you would expect to see a name on the table. However, if made by Gillows or Butler, before Morgan and Sanders parted company with him, adding a maker's name would not have been as important. What is known though is that the maker was very accomplished and a simple illustration of the quality is the use of oak as the secondary timber. This table is a scaled down version of the larger Imperial Dining tables and is very elegant for it. In its smallest form it is a useful side table or for one or two to dine at. Fully extended it will comfortably seat six although still remain shallow in depth. Circa 1800.

Size fully set up