



## Rare English Armorial Tapestry, circa 1697-1709

An incredibly rare English tapestry, decorated to the centre with the armorial for Sir Nathaniel Napier (1636-1709), 2nd Baronet of Middle Marsh and to the spandrels with crest and cypher for his second wife Susanna Guise by his marriage in 1697.

Demonstrating gros- and petit-point work.

Provenance: From the estate of Henry Lane Eno (1871-1928) and by descent to the current owner. Sir Nathaniel Napier travelled extensively in Europe in his early years and after his marriage in 1697 resumed his travels visiting France and Italy, Holland, Rotterdam and Hanover and Spa, Belgium. It is likely that the tapestry was created during these travels or at home by an émigré Huguenot craftsman. The Guise family home, Elmore Court in Gloucestershire, retains the wrought iron main gates, originally from Rendcombe. They display the same decorative design of the Guise emblem – the swan surmounted cypher – as this tapestry. Needlework carpets and hangings are an uncommon survivor from this date owing to the inherent fragility of their nature during everyday household life and use. The tradition of needlework, more commonly seen in chair coverings and small worked pieces, existed in England and Northern Europe through the production of 'table carpets'. There seems in this example to be a conscious emulation of the form of Chinese and Persian carpets – with the central design within roughly symmetrical floral background and spandrels. However, table carpets were designed as in the landscape view, whereas this is presented in a portrait format. Research to date has yet to reveal similar hangings from this period of this scale or quality. Condition report: Overall; generally good given age but with typical accruing of surface dirt, dust and small areas of loss from old insect damage. The surface with some pulling in areas and signs of small spot remedial stitched repairs. Areas of creasing and lifting from being rolled – and section horizontal, about 4/5ths of the way up, which may be a repaired horizontal tear or pull. The sides with some unstitching and pulling – the bottom end with some fraying from more contact with floor and passage of people. Colours slightly muted by sunlight. Remnants of old backing – and newer protective backing. Slightly musty smell.

Height: 300 cm Width: 159 cm

REF: A00149

£16,000.00