RAFFETY

FINE ANTIQUE CLOCKS



18TH CENTURY ANTIQUE ENGLISH GEORGE II VIRGINIA WALNUT BUREAU

Circa: United Kingdom, circa 1750

Good

109 x 102 cm
3' 6⁷/▮" x 3' 4¹/▮"

United Kingdom, circa 1750
109 x 102 x 58 cm (42 $^{7}/_{8}$ x 40 $^{1}/_{8}$ x 22 $^{7}/_{8}$ inches)
Walnut

A good quality George II period antique bureau in well figured walnut, standing on bracket feet and with replaced handles and escutcheons. It has a fall front with a loper support at each end and is set above four long finely graduated drawers. The beautiful fitted interior has six fretted pigeon holes, six drawers, secret book drawers and a central opening door, flanked by decorative carved pilasters.

This bureau is made of so-called “Virginia walnut”, or black walnut, from the Juglans Nigra variety of walnut tree, which was native to the eastern part of North America. This “Virginia walnut” began to be imported from North America in the 17th century, although it was not until the 1720s that it began to appear in England in much larger quantities. This seems to have coincided with two events. The first was the severe winter of 1709, which killed many European walnut trees, making the wood much scarcer, with a ban on its import from Europe into England. The other event was the Naval Stores Act of 1721, which ensured that all timber from the American colonies entered England duty free.

Virginia walnut was eventually superseded by mahogany, which became more popular from the 1750s

onwards.