



**Five Centuries: Furniture & Works of Art
inc. Property of the Earls of Crawford &
Balcarres (609)**

Thu, 3rd Sep 2020, Live Online

Viewing Times:

In-room viewing now closed.

Lot 515

Estimate: £1000 - £1500 + Fees

**RARE PAIR OF FRENCH CARTON MOULE 'SEASIDE'
DOLLS CIRCA 1800**

each with carved and painted papier maché features, in elaborate dress decorated with shell and mica, with a single and later glass dome

Qty: 2

Each 33.5cm high

Provenance: The Earls of Crawford and Balcarres, Balcarres House, Fife, Scotland

Note: During the early 1800s, the Emperor Napoleon reinstated the *gabelle*, a highly unpopular tax on salt which brought much poverty to the North-West regions of France, who were not granted exemptions. Salt workers here, or paludiers, were exploited for their goods, only to see them being sold for high mark-ups in other regions. Yet the picturesque scenes of coastal France continued to bring many wealthy visitors, prompting locals to make souvenirs from shells and other items foraged from their shorelines. These charming dolls, often referred to as *Les Poupée du Paludier*, were lavish in their decoration but reflected the traditional costume of the impoverished Breton paludiers. Their widespread appeal sparked a trend in 'shell art' and helped to sustain the livelihoods of coastal communities in France.