



Rare Books, Maps, Manuscripts & Photographs (220)

3rd September 2008, Edinburgh

Lot 221

Estimate: £12000 - £18000 + Fees

Annan, Thomas

Glasgow City Improvements Trust. Photographs of old closes, streets, &c. taken 1868-1877. [c.1878]. Folio, 40 mounted carbon prints, various sizes from 26.7 x 21 cm. to 37 x 30.5 cm., printed title and contents leaf, each print with numbered caption printed on the mount, original green morocco lettered "Old Glasgow" on upper cover, some light spotting and/or light dust marks to some margins, binding rubbed and slightly scraped, split at foot of upper joint

Note: Thomas Annan's photographs in this album are amongst the earliest taken specifically as a record of housing conditions prior to urban renewal and as such they are an important milestone in the history of documentary photography.

In an unusual move Thomas Annan was commissioned to record the buildings of the slums of the City Parish after the city passed the Glasgow City Improvements Act in 1866 which envisaged the demolition of the unhealthy "wynds" and "closes" at the heart of the city.

Before the publication of the present work Annan produced in 1872 a very small number of sets of albumen prints, each consisting of 31 prints, under the title *Old closes and streets of Glasgow*. The albumen prints were prone to fading and discolouration and in 1878 Annan republished the work, now expanded to comprise 40 views, as carbon prints that were both faster and cheaper to produce and more resilient than their albumen predecessors. One of the early sets of albumen prints, with the prints quite faded and the glue marks showing through from the back, was sold in these rooms, 11th July 2006, for £13,000.