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An impressive 18th century style carved statuary marble fireplace inlaid with the royal blue gemstone Sodalite, made by the famous London based White Allom Company, for the Scottish seat of the fabulously wealthy shipping magnate Sir William Cayzer's family home, Thripley House, Lundie. Circa 1905. See following page for providence further details.

Dimensions

Height 57¼in (145.5cm) width 74in (188cm)

Internal height 39in (99cm) width 40in (101.5cm)

Footblock to footblock 66in (167.5cm)

Further details and provenance

In the mid-18th century Palladian style, after an original design created by the workshops of Sir Henry Cheere (1703-1781). With a moulded, stepped breakfront shelf protruding over the jambs, the frieze with a central tablet of 'Summer' in statuary marble with a well-executed swag of full blooming flowers upheld at the sides by rings; the flanking side panels centred with acanthus flowers surrounded by geometric frets on inlaid blue marble. The tapering pilaster statuary jambs capped with ogee brackets carved with acanthus decoration, the end block above with further acanthus. The fireplace opening framed with rich blue veneers sandwiched between white mouldings, the whole raised on white footblocks.

Sodalite, a rich royal blue mineral, was first discovered in Greenland in 1811, but was hardly ever used until large deposits were discovered in 1891 in Ontario, Canada. It quickly became prized as a gem stone and as a highly decorative ornamental marble. The White Allom Company acquired a quarry of the marble, using it as early as 1904 at Marlborough House, London and for the hall of Sir Ernest Cassels (croy of Edward VII) at Brook House.

The White Allom Company was founded in 1893 by the English decorator and architect Sir Charles Carrick Allom (1865-1947), who quickly established a reputation on both sides of the Atlantic for being the industry leading interior decorator, carrying out work of a 'distinguished character' using antiques and their own in-house reproductions of furniture, architectural fittings including panelled rooms, fireplaces, lanterns, etc. Based in premises at Hanover Square, London, using their own highly skilled craftsmen and connoisseurs, including Murray Adams Acton and the furniture historian Percy Macquoid. Their numerous clients included the English Royal family, Edward VII, George V and VI, working at Windsor Castle and extensive work at Buckingham Palace and Marlborough House.

Early in the firms history they established a good working relationship with the Duveen Brothers acting as subcontractors for many of their clients; the Huntington's, Henry Clay Frick, William Randolph Hearst and Pierpoint Morgan to name but a few. The quality of their work was outstanding (even the Survey of London was unable to distinguish White Allom's work at 59 Grosvenor Square from the original 18th century).