

### 10504 - 18th Century George III Mahogany Bureau Bookcase owned by Henry Grattan



**Item Categories:** [Bookcases and Cabinets](#), [Furniture](#), [New In Dublin](#)

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#### Item Description

18th Century George III mahogany bureau bookcase owned by Henry Grattan. The moulded cornice raised above two finely glazed doors with reeded brass closing slip enclosing five shelves flanked with reeded columns above concealed fall front secretaire with brass pulls, the interior fitted with leather writing surface, drawers

and pigeon holes over two cupboard doors with reeded brass closing slip terminating on reeded bun foot.

Provenance:

This desk was owned by Henry Grattan (Dublin 1746 - London 1820) Ireland's greatest parliamentarian.

Grattan trained as a barrister in Dublin and in 1775, became a member of the Irish Parliament. At that time, the Irish Parliament was subject to Poyning's Law which decreed that all legislation put forward in Dublin had to be approved by the British Parliament. Also, the Penal Laws which were still being enforced meant that Roman Catholics and Presbyterians could not become members of parliament. This created an imbalanced Parliament with no representation for the majority of Irish citizens.

Grattan sought to democratically overturn these injustices and quickly became known as a guest speaker in the House. He called for Free Trade between Britain and Ireland, and the repeal of the Penal Laws, which were repressive laws directed against Roman Catholics and Presbyterians, the most important being the right to vote and the right to property. With Grattan's skill as an orator, and his influence in the chamber, in 1780 Poyning's Law was repealed and by 1782, the Irish Parliament had won legislative independence. This was a very short-lived victory for Irish democracy however as, with the rise of nationalist movements and demands for Catholic emancipation, the British government took repressive action for fear of Irish revolution (inspired by the American and French revolutions) and under the leadership of William Pitt, the Act of Union was passed in 1800. This effectively ended Irish legislative independence till 1922.

Grattan became a member of the British Parliament in 1805 and continued to fight for Catholic emancipation and for Irish rights. He worked for this cause until his death in London in 1820. He is buried in Westminster Abbey beside his friend Charles James Fox who shared his belief in religious tolerance.

## Dimensions

- Height: 96 inches
- Width: 43 inches
- Depth: 22 inches

## Item Gallery

