

PASH ANTIQUES

A. PASH & SONS OF MAYFAIR

A Parcel-gilt silver-plated "milton shield"

Elkington & Co

REF: 11854

Height: 88.87 cm (35") Width: 76.17 cm (30")



Léonard Morel-Ladeuil for Elkington Circa 1870

The Milton Shield - a large Victorian electro-type shield depicting scenes of Léonard Morel-Ladeuil interpretation of Milton's Poem Paradise Lost. The central panel depicts in high relief Raphael and Adam and Eve; to the right and left of this are two panels showing marching and defeated rebel angels, above is God the Father and below the archangel Michael defeating Satan, with gilded highlights and a rope work border, in an ebonised frame, signed Morel-Ladeuil Fecit 1866, and signed Elkington, length 85cm. *The Milton shield was designed for the Paris Exhibition of 1867, where it won a gold medal. The original artwork in sterling silver & silver & gold Damascened steel is in the Victorian and Albert Museum, London.

Léonard Morel-Ladeuil (1820 - 15 March 1888),

French goldsmith and sculptor, was born at Clermont-Ferrand.

He was apprenticed first to Morel, a manufacturer of bronzes, under whom he became one of the most expert chasers, or ciseleurs, in France, and then to Antoine Vechte, to acquire the art of repoussé—the art in which he was to excel. He studied further under JJ Fuchre and then attracted the notice of the comte d'Orsay and the duc de Morny, through whose recommendation the French government, desirous of popularising the idea of the new Imperialism, commissioned him to produce the Empire Shield.

Napoleon III notified his warm approval, but the trade, annoyed that a craftsman should obtain commissions direct, resented the innovation and thenceforward boycotted the young artist, whose beautiful and poetic vase, "Dance of the Willis" (the spirits dancing round the vase, above the lake represented on a dish below) none would take. He was encouraged nevertheless by a foreign dealer in Paris, Marché, who employed him on statuettes, mainly religious in character, until 1859, when Messrs Eikington, in view of the Great Exhibition of 1862, engaged him to work in Birmingham for three years in repoussé, assuring him a free hand.

Following his silver "Night came Day," and then the "Inventions" vase, which placed him at once at the top of his profession. This was followed by the beautiful table called "Dreams," which was subscribed for (£500) by Birmingham as the town wedding-gift to the prince and princess of Wales. Morel-Ladeuil's contract was then renewed for five years, but as a matter of fact he remained with the firm for twenty-three years at their London house, the first result being his masterpiece the "Milton Shield: Paradise Lost" (in repoussé steel and silver), which was the sensation of the Paris Exhibition. It was bought by the English government for £3000.

Then after "The Months" came another masterpiece, the "Helicon Vase", in steel, silver, and gold, which was presented by the ladies and gentlemen of the royal house to Queen Victoria on her first jubilee. Decorated with gold damascening by the Spanish craftsman Plácido Zuloaga, it was des...