

A North Italian ormolu-mounted kingwood, tulipwood, satinwood and parquetry demilune commode, attributed to Giuseppe Viglione (1748–1823), Turin late 18th Century.

The *Grigio di Valdieri* figured marble top is supported by a demilune case with an architectural parquetry frieze, fitted with a central drawer above two transverse veneered drawers, with lateral doric capitals patterns, flanked by cabinet doors, on tapering cylindrical legs.

Height: 37 in. (94 cm)

Wight: 54½ in. (138,5 cm)

Depth: 22¼ in. (56,5 cm)

Literature:

- Roberto Antonetto; *Il Mobile Piemontese del settecento*, Allemandi, Torino, 2010, v. I, pp.304–312, **illustrated** p.306, fig. I.C.
- Giancarlo Ferraris; *Pietro Piffetti e gli ebanisti a Torino*, Allemandi, Torino, 1992, pp.189–91 and 249–51.

A commode to be identified with the present model is listed in the inventory of the furniture provided by Giuseppe Viglione for the Castello di Rivoli, one of the Royal residences of the Kings of Sardinia. The document, dated 20th May 1794, reads, 'Note of the works both provided and still in the workshop of the cabinetmaker Viglione for use at the Castello di Rivoli on 19th April 1794 [...] another commode (*buro*) of a semi-oval shape veneered in *bosco rosso* and with a top of *Valdieri* marble, with bronze mounts (*ferrato e guarnito*) [...] 170 lire' (Documento n.10, 20 May 1794, '*Nota de' lavori provisti, e contenuti dall'ebanista Viglione per servizio del reale Castello di Rivoli alli 19 Ap.le 1794 [...] Altro buro di forma mezzo ovale placato bosco rosso con tavola di marmo di valdieri ferrato, e guarnito [...] 170 Lire*', Giancarlo Ferraris, *Pietro Piffetti e gli ebanisti a Torino*, op. cit., p.250, my translation).

Giuseppe Pietro Viglione (Turin, 1748–1823) was Royal cabinetmaker for the Savoy court from 1789 to 1815. He was born on 14th September 1748 in Lissone delle Langhe, a little village closer to Turin, the same place where his uncle Luigi Prinotto, one the most important *ebanista* of Piedmont together with the great Pietro Piffetti, came from.

Giuseppe was approved master in the early 1780s. His '*laboratorio*' was in the centre of Turin, the capital of the kingdom of Sardinia, in Contrada Santa Teresa, just in front the Palace of the Count of Collegno. In 1792 the workshop was recorded as the first of the city, with six employees. From 1789 to 1797 Savoy account books record several expensive payments to

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Viglione for pieces provided for the Court, including commodes with design and technical characteristics very similar to the present one (five examples are in BRT Recapiti in 1789, 1794 and 1797).

Viglione stopped working for the Savoy Court during the French invasion of Italy, but resumed his post of royal cabinetmaker as soon Vittorio Emanuele I of Savoy came back to Turin from Cagliari in 1815.

Antonetto (op. cit., pp.305 and 312) illustrates two demilune commodes with characteristics identical to the present piece. The first one, signed and dated 1781, has the same top drawer with the same ormolu mounts as the present commode, whilst the second presents the same kind of parquetry, but with a design of a heavier French inspiration.

