Game of Billiards

Thomas Rowlandson

Sold

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Description

Thomas Rowlandson (1756-1827)
The Game of Billiards

Pen and grey ink and watercolour
11.8 by 19.2 cm., 4 1/2 by 7 1/2 in.

Provenance
Mrs Caroline Scott, 1858;
Spink;
Private collection, U.K. until 2018

This drawing probably dates from circa 1817. The player about to make a shot is using a mace, with which the ball was shoved rather than struck. The dominant billiard game in Britain from about 1770 until the early twentieth century was English Billiards, played with three balls and six pockets on a large rectangular table. A similar drawing of a game of billiards, but in reverse, is in the collection of the Yale Center for British Art, New Haven (TMS 5665).

Engraved:
As `By Gamblers linked in Folly's noose Play ill or well he's sure to lose', for `Dances of Life', 1817, p.230

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