Elizabeth Wyndham

Violet, Duchess Of Rutland

Sold



REF: 94966

Height: 82.55 cm (32.5")

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Width: 58.42 cm (23")

Description

Elizabeth Geraldine Wyndham was born Betty Seymour in 1922. She was the adopted daughter of Charles Henry Wyndham, 3rd Baron Leconfield and was brought up at Petworth House, Sussex. A was a great beauty and extremely intelligent, being a brilliant pianist, fearless horsewoman and fluent in French and German. Her language skills resulted in her being recruited to work in the government decryption centre at Bletchley Park during the war. After the Italian surrender she moved to Rome where she worked for the British Council on educational projects and at the end of the war she went to Berlin were she worked for the Allied Command in the city before returning to Petworth to nurse her elderly father. In 1955 she was recruited into the Information Research Department of the Foreign Office, which was set up to counter Soviet propaganda. On the Africa desk she served as women’s affairs officer and had postings in Khartoum and Leopoldville. While driving to Mali from Congo she was briefly kidnapped and beaten up by guerrillas, but with her considerable courage she intimidated them to such an extent that they eventually let her go. In Khartoum her success in bringing forward local women was overshadowed by her amorous successes with local men. Her glamour was enhanced because she briefly kept a cheetah. She married briefly and thereafter remained single and retired to village life in Buckinghamshire where she died in 2008.