

JOHN MITCHELL

FINE PAINTINGS

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Robert Cleveley (Deptford 1747 - Dover 1809)

An Admirals' Conference off the Isle of Wight – one of a pair (2)

watercolour on wove paper,
one sheet bearing watermark and date 'J RUSE/1799'
11¼ x 18¾ in. (28.5 x 47.6 cm.),
with fine period carved and gilded English frames

These are perhaps the finest watercolours by Robert Cleveley known today, and have come to light in a private collection in the United States. In size, accomplishment and condition they surpass any of those in the collections of the National Maritime Museum, the British Museum, the V&A and the Yale Center for British Art, while the majesty of the subject matter will have endless appeal to enthusiasts of the great age of sail. Cleveley's familiarity with his subject and his superb technique with the medium come together in this pair to remarkable effect and, from the collector's point of view, the singular school of English marine drawing does not come much better than this.