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THREE PIGEONS

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COMPANY SHOCKED AT A LADY GETTING UP TO RING THE BELL,

James Gillray, published 20 November 1804

A hand-coloured satirical etching by James Gillray, Published by Hannah Humphrey. Five men are depicted courting a wealthy widow in her luxuriously furnished breakfast parlour over boiled eggs bread and muffins. The widow has risen from her chair to pull a bell-pull while frantic efforts of the suitors to stop her have produced a sequence of disasters. Published by Gillray's long-time and eventual exclusive publisher, Hannah Humphrey. Mrs Humphrey was the sister of engraver William Humphrey and became not only an independent businesswoman in Georgian London but London's leading seller of caricature prints. She began publishing prints in the 1770s at a premises on St Martin's Lane before moving, first to Old Bond Street, then New Bond Street before finally settling at 27 St James's Street. James Gillray lodged with Mrs Humphrey for twenty years from 1791 and although some suspected an illicit relationship it was in all probability a commercial and platonic friendship. Mrs Humphrey cared for Gillray as his sight failed him and later tended to him during the alcohol induced madness of his last five years of life.

DIMENSIONS: 38.1cm (15") High, 49.53cm (19½") Wide

PRICE: £360

STOCK CODE: A097

