

Finch & C^o



FRENCH PALAIS ROYALE GOLD MOUNTED CARVED MOTHER OF PEARL SHELL POCKET SNUFF BOX

A FINE FRENCH PALAIS ROYALE GOLD MOUNTED CARVED MOTHER OF PEARL SHELL POCKET SNUFF BOX SHAPED AS A SMALL BOAT, A MERMAID WITH A SPIRALLING FISH'S TAIL AND LONG TRESSES CARVED AS A FIGUREHEAD TO THE BOW, THE LID CARVED WITH A SCENE OF FAITH HOLDING AN ANCHOR SURROUNDED BY TWO CHERUBS, THE GOLD HINGE WITH ENGRAVED FOLIATE DESIGNS.

CIRCA 1800-1820

SIZE: 1.6CM HIGH, 7CMLONG, 3CMWIDE - ½ INS HIGH, 2¾ INS LONG, 1¼ INS WIDE

LITERATURE

THIS UNUSUAL AND FINELY CARVED SMALL SNUFFBOX WAS MADE FOR A WAISTCOAT POCKET AND PERHAPS FOR THE USE OF A MERCHANT SHIPS CAPTAIN OR HIGH-RANKING NAVAL OFFICER. IT WAS BELIEVED BY SAILORS THAT HIGH WINDS AND GALES AT SEA WOULD SUBSIDE IF A NAKED WOMAN APPEARED BEFORE THEM, AND IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT SO MANY OF THE FIGUREHEADS OF SHIPS WERE CARVED WITH A WOMAN WITH A BARE BREAST.