Finch & Co



ENGLISH AUTOMATA POCKET SNUFF BOX OF SILVER MOUNTED TORTOISESHELL

AN UNUSUAL ENGLISH AUTOMATA POCKET SNUFF BOX OF SILVER MOUNTED TORTOISESHELL. THE INSIDE TOP LID CONTAINING A MOVING PAINTED VELLUM SCENE OF ST GEORGE ON HORSEBACK SLAYING THE DRAGON. A NATURAL PEARL AND SILVER PUSH BUTTON TO THE TOP OPERATING THE MECHANISM.

THE SILVER RIM MARKED J * D FECIT

CIRCA 1750-60

SIZE: 3CM HIGH, 9CM WIDE, 7CM DEEP – 1¼ INS HIGH, 3½ INS WIDE, 2¾ INS DEEP

LITERATURE

SNUFF, LIKE GOOD CLARET, IS THOUGHT BY SOME TO BE IMPROVED IF ITS CHILL IS TAKEN OFF, SO MOST POCKET BOXES WERE MADE OF MATERIALS THAT CONDUCTED HEAT. OVER THREE CENTURIES MANY DIFFERENT BOXES WERE MADE, OFTEN OF EXQUISITE WORKMANSHIP ORNAMENTED WITH DIAMONDS OR CAMEOS, AND EVEN THE ORDINARY WOODEN KIND ARE NOTABLE FOR THEIR PERFECTLY FITTED HINGES AND LIDS. THIS BOX IS VERY UNUSUAL FOR HAVING A CONCEALED MECHANISM THAT OPERATES A THEATRICAL SCENE, PRESUMABLY FOR THE AMUSEMENT OF ACQUAINTANCES IN THE HALF-LIGHT OF VAUXHALL GARDENS!