Finch & Co



COLLECTION OF FIVE ROYAL FRENCH DOCUMENTS

AN INTERESTING COLLECTION OF FIVE ROYAL FRENCH DOCUMENTS SIGNED AND SEALED VARIOUSLY BY KING LOUIS XIV, LOUIS XV AND LOUIS XVI
TOGETHER WITH AN ENGLISH VELLUM LEASE OF 1814
ALL CONTAINED IN A GILT TITLED LEATHER WALLET
17TH AND 18TH CENTURIES
SIZE: (OF WALLET): 26.5CM HIGH, 22CM WIDE - 10½ INS HIGH, 8¾ INS WIDE

LITERATURE

LOUIS XIV (1638 - 1715) MARRIED MARIE THÉRÍ¨SE OF SPAIN AND WAS KNOWN AS THE 'SUN KING'. HE WAS THE GREATEST MONARCH OF HIS AGE ESTABLISHING THE PARAMETERS OF SUCCESSFUL ABSOLUTISM. HIS LONG REIGN MARKED THE CULTURAL ASCENDANCY OF FRANCE WITHIN EUROPE SYMBOLISED BY HIS PALACE OF VERSAILLES. LOUIS XIV FELL IN LOVE WITH VERSAILLES WHEN HE FIRST SAW IT AND IT BECAME THE LOVE OF HIS LIFE. FOR YEARS BEFORE HE LIVED THERE IT WAS NEVER OUT OF HIS MIND, AND HIS COURTIERS CALLED IT HIS 'UNDESERVING FAVOURITE'.
WHEN LOUIS XIV DIED AT VERSAILLES IN 1715 HE WAS SUCCEEDED BY HIS GREAT GRANDSON LOUIS XV (1710 - 1774) WHO CAME TO BE KNOWN AS THE 'WELL BELOVED'. AMONG HIS INNUMERABLE MISTRESSES THE TWO MOST FAMOUS AND INFLUENTIAL WERE THE COUNTESS DU BARRY AND MADAME DE POMPADOUR.
LOUIS XVI (1754 - 93) WAS KING OF FRANCE FROM 1774 TO 1793. HE FAILED TO GIVE CONSISTENT SUPPORT TO MINISTERS WHO TRIED TO REFORM THE OUTMODED FINANCIAL AND SOCIAL STRUCTURES OF THE COUNTRY AND ALLOWED FRANCE TO BECOME INVOLVED IN THE WAR OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE 1778 - 83, WHICH EXACERBATED THE NATIONAL DEBT. TO AVERT A DEEPENING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CRISIS HE AGREED IN 1789 TO SUMMON THE ESTATES GENERAL. HOWEVER, ENCOURAGED BY THE QUEEN, MARIE ANTOINETTE, HE RESISTED DEMANDS FROM THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR SWEEPING REFORMS AND IN OCTOBER WAS TAKEN WITH HIS FAMILY FROM VERSAILLES TO PARIS AS HOSTAGES TO THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT. THEIR ATTEMPTED FLIGHT TO VARENNES IN JUNE 1791 BRANDED THE ROYAL PAIR AS TRAITORS. LOUIS RELUCTANTLY APPROVED THE NEW CONSTITUTION IN SEPTEMBER, BUT HIS MORAL AUTHORITY HAD COLLAPSED. IN AUGUST 1792 AN INSURRECTION SUSPENDED LOUIS'S CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION AND IN SEPTEMBER THE MONARCHY WAS ABOLISHED. HE WAS TRIED BEFORE THE NATIONAL CONVENTION FOR CONSPIRACY WITH FOREIGN POWERS AND THEN GUILLOTINED IN PARIS IN 1793.