Finch & Co



A RARE TRAVELLING PRIEST'S STRONGBOX

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IRON, WOOD, PAPER, LEATHER, GILT POLYCHROME, BRASS

GERMAN

LATE 16TH CENTURY / EARLY 17TH CENTURY

SIZE: 41CM HIGH, 57CM WIDE, 42CM DEEP - 16 INS HIGH, 22½ INS WIDE, 16½ INS DEEP

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LITERATURE

STRONGBOXES WERE USED FOR CENTURIES, WITH SOME EXAMPLES FOUND IN ANCIENT EGYPTIAN TOMBS. THE USE OF LOCKING MECHANISMS AND HIDDEN COMPARTMENTS WERE ESSENTIAL, WHILE TRAVELLING, TO KEEP VALUABLES AND IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS SAFE AND FAR FROM REACH. HOWEVER, THE 'TRAVELLING' PRIEST OFTEN HAD MORE REASON TO KEEP HIS ITEMS FROM PRYING EYES, FOR REASONS OF NOT JUST SECURITY, BUT PERSONAL WELFARE AND SAFETY, IF EXPOSED TO LANDS AND STRANGERS WHO WERE NOT OF THE SAME RELIGION.

THE METAL BOUND STRONG BOX, COVERED WITH ‘STRAP-WORK’ AND STUDDED DECORATION. THE LOCK PLATE WITH LATTICEWORK ‘CROWN’. TWO FURTHER LOCKS BELOW, WITH CARRYING HANDLES TO EITHER SIDE. THE INTERIOR WITH GILT EMBOSSED LEATHER PANEL REVEALING A DOCUMENT COMPARTMENT TO THE LID. EIGHT EMBOSSED LEATHER LIDDED BOXES TO THE UPPER LEVEL EACH WITH BRASS RING HANDLES. THE DOUBLE DOORS REVEAL PAPER LINED DRAWERS, WHICH IN TURN CONCEAL HIDDEN COMPARTMENTS.

PROVENANCE

EX PRIVATE ENGLISH COLLECTION