



Shell And Solid Silver Tobacco Box/snuffbox - Scottish - 18th Century



400 EUR

Period : 18th century

Condition : Etat d'usage

Material : Other

Length : 10,5 cm

Width : 7 cm

Description

An elegant 18th-century snuffbox crafted from a cowrie shell (Cypraea), finely mounted in an engraved silver setting. The shell, with its natural ivory and mottled brown hues, displays a beautiful antique patina and some visible cracks, attesting to its authenticity and age. The oval silver lid is richly decorated with floral and rocaille motifs in the Rococo style. At its center is a heraldic composition: a rampant lion, an emblematic symbol of Scottish tradition, surrounded by a scroll bearing the motto: "SUR ESPERANCE." This inscription, in French, can be interpreted as a variation of "Where is hope?" or "Hope," a recurring theme in the noble mottoes of the period. Historical and heraldic context: The rampant lion is a major figure in the heraldry of the Kingdom of Scotland, notably associated with

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Scottish sovereigns since the Middle Ages. It symbolizes bravery, sovereignty, and nobility. The combined presence of a Scottish symbol and a motto in French reflects the historical context of the close relationship between France and Scotland, known as the Auld Alliance (14th-18th centuries). Many Scottish officers and gentlemen served in France, notably in the renowned Scottish Guard, which explains the use of French in some mottoes with Scottish elements. This snuffbox could thus evoke an owner of Scottish origin or a discerning collector sensitive to this political and cultural iconography.