



Braunschweig Cartridge Template



2 500 EUR

Period : 16th century

Condition : Etat d'usage

Material : Metal

Height : 12.5cm

Description

In the 16th century, the increasing sophistication of firearms--from hand cannons to arquebuses and wheel-lock mechanisms--called for innovations that would allow for faster and more efficient loading. Among the most ingenious solutions were "patron" cartridges--special cartridge cases containing paper cartridges pre-filled with gunpowder and a lead bullet. This system allowed for precise, rapid, and reliable loading. The finest and most elaborate examples come from German regions, notably Saxony, Brunswick, and the southern states, and were worn at the belt by elite units such as the Trabantenleibgarde. The surviving examples are generally dated to between approximately 1550 and 1590. The one presented here can be attributed with certainty to Braunschweig

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(Brunswick), as evidenced by the exceptional quality of its engraving and the richness of its exterior decoration. Its surface is enlivened by finely executed mascarons and mythological creatures, forming a sophisticated mythological composition (likely depicting Saturn and Ops) set within an elegant cartouche. At its center, a striking medallion is enhanced by the juxtaposition of an angelic figure and a satyr's head, reflecting the artistic refinement of the era. The construction is equally masterful. The lid features a finely crafted spring mechanism at the front, demonstrating both functionality and ingenuity. The interior originally housed a wooden frame with a perforated copper grid, designed to hold the individual cartouches in place; unfortunately, this element is now missing. The base is adorned with a finely carved frieze of acanthus leaves, and it is highly likely that the piece once rested on a tapered foot, a characteristic feature of similar objects commissioned by Brunswick.