



PROANTIC
LE PLUS BEAU CATALOGUE D'ANTIQUITES

Artillery, Artillery Train Of The Imperial Guard, First Empire: Soldiers From Strasbourg Fig

500 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état



Description

ARTILLERY, IMPERIAL GUARD
ARTILLERY TRAIN FIRST EMPIRE:
STRASBOURG SOLDIERS CARDBOARD
FIGURINE gouache painted by the WURTZ family, second half of the 19th century, circa 1815-1848. 31156-12 Four riders, H from the bottom of the base to the eye level 10.5 cm, and a cannon. Mounted on a wooden base. France. First half of the 19th century. Good condition. PROVENANCE: Former Wurtz-Pees collection, then Saint-Aubin, and private collection. Monsieur Marcel Saint-Aubin, a collector who became an antiquarian between the two World Wars. To my knowledge, no biography or article has ever been published about this personality who is nevertheless known to collectors and is often cited in the provenance

Dealer

Bertrand Malvaux

Expert agréé par la CNES Chambre Nationale des Experts
Spécialisés

Tel : 02 40 73 36 00

Mobile : 06 07 75 74 63

22 rue Crébillon

Nantes 44000

of historical objects of great quality. That is why I will open my archives to shed more light on this esteemed connoisseur:"Mobilized during the First World War along with his brother in the infantry, the latter was killed in Verdun. Both shared the same passion for military memorabilia; they both drew and published their drawings in the magazine 'La Giberne' before 1914.After the war, he set up as an antique dealer. In 1926, he lived at 108 rue de Ménilmontant (Paris 20th arrondissement), far from the antiques district. His choice focused on the specialty that attracted him for a long time: military curiosities. The spark that led him to this specialty came from his first find: an officer's saber from the Consulate period, his first beautiful saber; he called it his 'lucky charm' and always kept it.The profession of an antique dealer allowed Saint-Aubin to see and possess these beloved objects for a while. A fine connoisseur, he never made mistakes, and his clients benefited from his expertise. A passionate researcher, everything he discovered in his life was surprisingly diverse. Silent and modest, he had an art and a way of doing things that left an indelible memory among collectors who knew him.Like most military object dealers of that time, Marcel Saint-Aubin did not have a store. He received clients in his apartment, where few objects were displayed, and they only occupied a temporary space. Generally, like Paul Jean, he would fetch the objects he wanted to sell from the neighboring room and mostly present them without saying anything, with a slight smile, or if the presented object was truly exceptional, he would simply say without raising his voice, 'This is top-notch...'.In June 1940, during the occupation, he moved to Guingamp. He returned to Paris and resettled himself at the end of 1951 in the house he had acquired, 16 rue Henri Pape, in the 13th arrondissement, once again, very far from the antique district.His love for the objects he parted with was reflected even in the care he took in their packaging. Very skilled with his hands, he perfectly protected even the most

modest piece. Marcel Saint-Aubin passed away at the age of 83, taking with him the esteem of all who knew him, leaving behind the memory of a man with great moral values.

"HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: The Strasbourg soldiers are cardboard figurines, 'flat' soldiers, cut from rigid cardboard. In most cases, these soldiers are drawn and printed on sheets to multiply their numbers more easily.

Christian Blondieau in his work 'Petits soldats de plomb, d'étain, de papier, de carton ... 1765-1965 - Le guide du collectionneur' Editions Le Képi Rouge Paris 1996, specifies about cardboard soldiers: "[...] unlike paper soldiers intended more for children, often colored in a clumsy way, the cardboard soldier is made for adults and provides a guarantee of great uniformological precision, which will serve as the basis for our modern documentation... Why do the little soldiers of Alsace stand out? Because they were mostly created by eyewitnesses of the time or their descendants, and are often contemporaneous with the era they represent.

During the wars of the Revolution and the Empire, the inhabitants of Strasbourg (then a garrison town) saw a large number of soldiers with multicolored uniforms moving through their city heading to fight in Germany. This influx of troops, lasting more than fifteen years, gave some the idea to capture these handsome soldiers in real-time.

Alsatian authors agree to cite Benjamin Zix (1772-1811) as the genre's precursor. Anticipating Léopold Beyer, the German Geisler, or the Austrian Klein, the Alsatian Zix gives us a very realistic view of the soldiers of the time, as a combatant himself, he traversed the battlefields more often armed with a pencil than a rifle. He became a draughtsman Officer of the Army. From the peace of 1815 to the war of 1914, Strasbourg artists continued this need to draw and paint from generation to generation [...].

During the First Empire, Strasbourg had around 30,000 inhabitants, with a permanent garrison of between 6,000 and 10,000 soldiers. However, this city was also the obligatory passage for countless troops of

the Revolution and the Grand Army heading for campaigns beyond the Rhine. Among all these artists, and for this period, the three most well-known are: Thiébaud Borerst (misspelled as Boersch) (1782-1824) a miller who started drawing around 1800, a nephew of the painter Benjamin Zix, his collection was auctioned in Angers on March 10, 1971, probably having the most refined style we know. Eugène Nicolle (1802-1872) who painted his soldiers from 1817 (at age 15) for 55 years, his collection is preserved at the Compiègne Museum, his style is more naïve. Wurtz is given a specific paragraph. Paul Schmidt, each figurine is annotated with the name of the soldier as "sketched" on the back, this collection is kept at the Army Museum in Paris and notably represents the soldiers of the National Guard of Strasbourg. Other artists also worked in a similar manner: Frédéric Schmidt (born in 1796). But we can also mention Édouard Kratz (1803-1885), Schmidt's son (born in 1824), Théodore Carl (born in 1837)...WURTZ-PEEZ COLLECTION (German spelling Würtz): Wurtz started his documentation during the First Empire thanks to his friend J.P L'Évêque, a former surgeon of the Grand Army who had gathered significant documentation on Napoleon's armies. He began making his figurines in 1825 with the help of his son and then Pees, his father-in-law. The production continued with his son, who completed his 'Napoleonic' collection under the Second Republic (1850), and some of the figurines we are presenting have the date 1848 at the back of the cardboard. These figurines are of very high quality. Edward Ryan in his work "Paper Soldiers the illustrated history of printed paper armies of the 18th, 19th & 20th centuries" (Golden Age Editions, London 1995) writes, "the most precise and comprehensive representation of the troops of the First Empire." Each regiment is represented in all ranks and types of uniforms exhaustively, which is rare in the representations of Strasbourg soldiers. The son of Mr. Wurtz, Frédéric Wurtz probably completed the uniforms

he did not observe himself from other documentary sources. After the fall of the Second Empire, Frédéric Wurtz refused to remain in Strasbourg under Prussian occupation and moved to Paris, where he ran a pharmacy on Boulevard de Clichy. Following his death in 1898, most of his collection - nearly 16,000 figurines - was donated to the Musée de l'Armée on October 1, 1899, by his widow and his son, a medical major; they were exhibited in 1938 and have been there since. The expert Christian Blondieau judges Wurtz's style to be comparable to that of Nicollet and Kratz.