

ROYAL GERMAN ROUND SILVER LARGE DISH AND COVER (CLOCHE)

Object Number: #1000

City hallmark: Dresden 1767

Maker: Gebrüder Schroedel

see: Rosenberg, vol. II, no. 1671, 1710, 1816

Dish: Dm 42,3 cm; engraved inventory number "8".

Cloche: Dm 39 cm; height: 26 cm; engraved inventory number "1".

Weight together: 5.160 gr

Provenance: Monogram "FA" below in shield and below German Royal crown (Kurhut) for Friedrich August III King of Saxony.

On the scratch weight engraved: In the 18th century, the unit for determining weight was the mark. One (Cologne) Mark had e.g. 233, 86 g. One lot was the 16th part of a Mark equal to 14.6 g. A penny was 1 g.

Royal German Round Silver Large Dish and Cover

The present large silver dish and cover belonged to the silver chamber at the Wettiner-Court in Dresden:

Frederick Augustus III/I, King and Elector of Saxony and Duke of Warsaw (1750-1827)

Frederick Augustus III was the second and only survived child of the Elector Frederick Christian (1722-1763) and his wife duchess Maria Antonia of Bavaria (1724-1780). His father took over power from Frederick Augustus II in 1763, but he died three months later.

Frederick Augustus III assumed political power for 59 years – and by this, he had the longest reign of all the members of the House of Wettin. In 1769, he got married to Countess Palatine Maria Amalia Augusta of Zweibrücken-Birkenfeld (1752-1828), sister of King Maximilian I Joseph of Bavaria. The royal pair had four children, though only one daughter survived to adulthood, Maria Augusta of Saxony.

Frederick Augustus III had declined in 1791 the hereditary Polish Crown. He became in 1806 King Frederick Augustus I of Saxony by the grace of Emperor Napoleon. In 1807, he was nominated Duke of Warsaw. After the Napoleonic Wars, Saxony was administered first by a Russian and then by a Prussian General government, it lost two thirds of its territory and one third of its inhabitants. The next years of the reign of Frederick Augustus until his death remained calm.

The Royal Silver Collection of the House of Wettin and the Monogram 'FA'



The court of the House of Wettin in Saxony was quite influenced from the French court of Louis XIV in Versailles since the reign of the John George III, Elector of Saxony (1647-1691) and the Princess Anna Sophie of Denmark (1647-1717). Their table culture and in particular the silver services added a great glamour to the official life of the court.

In 1694, the Prince Frederick Augustus followed as Elector his brother John George who died. Frederick Augustus obtained the royal crown of Poland. Between 1697 and 1763 and with a short interruption in 1706 and 1709, the electorate of Saxony came in personal union with the Kingdom of Poland and both electors of Saxony Frederick Augustus I and II reigned, bearing the royal name of Augustus II and Augustus III.

During the Augustus-era in the royal Saxon-Polish court began an unparalleled display of splendor, influenced particularly by the Versailles court, under the reign of Frederick Augustus I, also called August the Strong. The city of Dresden was still the seat of the government even after the acquisition of the Polish crown and it was also the primary location for the royal silver collection, which gained in importance. Orders for silver objects were given mostly to gold- and silversmiths in Dresden.

The silver services with the monogram 'FA' present a uniform style and it could be said that they belong together. These services build up the so-called Family Silver Collections 'von Schrödel'. The silver objects from the services of the House of Wettin bear, next to the initials, the inventory numbers and the weight information.

Silver of the House of Wettin through the Ages

The Royal silver collection in Dresden existed in its entirety until the end of the First World War and the abolishment of monarchy. The collection was with no doubt one of the richest collections of silver in Germany. In 1919, every possession in Saxony that belonged to the House of Wettin was confiscated by the state. After 1924, the Royal collection of silver went to the property of the family association Haus Wettin Albertinische Linie e.V., the administrator of which was Prince Ernst Heinrich of Saxony, Duke of Saxony (1896-1971).

With the breakup of the Second World War, the artworks were in the centre of a rescue plan. In 1944, a part of the silver of the House of Wettin was put in wooden boxes, was stored and with the help of six French prisoners of war, they were buried (in total 43 boxes) or hidden in a church in Reichenberg. Despite this, many silver objects of this treasure were melted down after 1946/7, some were excavated and some were transported to Russia as spoils of war.

After the war, some objects were given back to Germany in the 1990s. Other objects and artworks from the silver Royal collection of the Wettin House were smuggled in black market and were sold in different, exceptional auctions around the world.

The fascinating history of the silver collection as well as of the proprietor's changes through the ages give to the silver collection of the House of Wettin allures of a legend.