FRENCH BULLDOGS AND THE RUSSIAN IMPERIAL FAMILY

Introduction The history supplied prior to purchase by Wartski



A jewelled and enamelled hardstone study of a French bulldog by Carl Fabergé,

naturalistically carved from petrified wood in a seated position, with the dominating head and ears that characterise the breed, wearing a dog collar enamelled with black and white with yellow gold fittings, fastened by a rose diamond set buckle, each of the collar's holes set with a rose diamond, mounted with a ring for a lead to the rear and suspending a gold bell, its eyes set with two large old brilliant cut diamonds.

Signed 'C. Fabergé' in Latin characters to the underside and engraved 'C. Fabergé' in Cyrillic to loop.

St. Petersburg, circa 1908,

London Inventory number: 23914.

9cm. tall.

Contained in its original double door, fitted silk and velvet lined holly wood case.

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The dog appears in the sales ledger of Fabergé's London branch (above), described as '*French Bulldog, petri. Wood, tc*'. The statuette was sold on 21^{st} November 1916 to Mrs. Mango, an heiress of an Ottoman shipping dynasty, whose father was the Turkish ambassador to St. Petersburg, for £90. This was a substantial amount for a Fabergé animal. The largest carving in the Royal Collection, a crow in obsidian and jasper was bought by Queen Alexandra in 1914 for £75. The study of a Maltese terrier bought by Leopold de Rothschild on the same day as Mrs Mango acquired the bulldog, cost £18.

Wartski,

Sold to Sir Bernard Eckstein (collector and heir to the Eckstein South African mining fortune) on 26th January 1935 for £25 (stock no 150D),

Sold by Sir Bernard with the Imperial Winter Egg at Sotheby's, London, February 1949,

Wartski,

Valerie Hobson, Mrs Profumo,

Wartski,

Lord Thomson of Fleet.

Wartski,

Illustrated:

The Art of Carl Fabergé, A. K Snowman,

London, 1952, plate 214.

Luxury in Wood: Forgotten Fabergé, Antique Dealer and Collectors Guide, May/June 2004.

Exhibited:

Fabergé a loan exhibition of the works of Carl Fabergé: Jeweller and Goldsmith to the Imperial Court of Russia, Wartski, London, 8th to 25th November 1949, no. 126.

> Fabergé from Private Collections, Wartski, London, 1992, no. 40.