## Michael Stuart

May 2018

This is the most beautiful lock now in my collection, and perhaps the most beautiful that I have ever owned. It is a French Louis XVI style fire-gilt bronze horizontal rim lock ("chateau lock").

This lock was made by Louis-Charles Sterlin. He was a locksmith and lock maker in Paris beginning in 1782. His business would eventually become the company that is known today as Bricard. (Eugene Bricard was his apprentice, and eventually married Sterlin's daughter and took over the business). Because of the style and construction, this lock was most likely manufactured between 1782 and 1835 and was made for a very wealthy individual. Could this have been King Louis XVI or Marie Antoinette? It is within the distinct realm of possibility, as they did not lose their heads in the guillotine until 1793, and they maintained multiple palaces and chateaus in and around Paris and elsewhere – But there is more to the story.

Many people may not realize that King Louis XVI was an amateur locksmith and hobbyist! He loved his locks and would rather spend time with his master locksmith friend Francois Gamain in his workshop. It is said that King Louis oversaw all of the locks in the Palace of Versailles. Did he also have his own collection? That fact may be lost to history. Unfortunately, one could say that his passion for locks may have ultimately contributed to his downfall (AKA: "beheading"), as Gamain betrayed the king by telling the revolutionary authorities where his secret papers were stored in a special, hidden wall safe which they had both constructed together. (It does tend to explain some of the competitiveness we see today as modern lock collectors! ~laugh~)

Anyway, if you are interested in additional history, there is plenty available on France in the late 18<sup>th</sup> to early 19<sup>th</sup> century, King Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, and the Bricard Company. You might be surprised at the common misconceptions that most have of the time. With all of the turmoil and chaos and change, along with wars and fires since then, it amazes me that some small artifacts of true beauty have survived.

https://www.biography.com/news/king-louis-xvi-and-marie-antoinette-execution-anniversary
#LOCKHISTORY #LOUISXVI #FRENCHREVOLUTION #STERLIN #FRENCHLOCK #SERRURE

Kevin Moreau May 2018

Henri Bourbon, or Henry IV of France, decreed that his royal descendants learn a trade. His son, Louis XIII was a talented gunsmith, and I believe that his son, Louis XIV learned foundry work. I believe that Louis XV learned clock making.



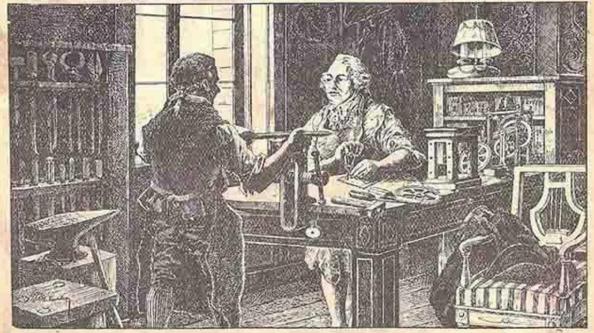












Louis XVI était un homme simple, qui aimait à se distraire en s'occupant à des travaux d'artisan. Dans les combles du palais de Versailles, il avait fait installer un véritable atelier où il passait de longues heures. Le serrurier Gamain — que cous voyez de dos — lui apprenaît à fabriquer des serrures à secret et des horloges.