Christopher Clarke Antiques

Dealers in Campaign Furniture
& Travel Items

The British Agent's Dispatch Box

Wickwar

Sold

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REF: 82012

Height: 17 cm (6.7")

Width: 46 cm (18.1")

Depth: 30.5 cm (12")

Description

This black leather Dispatch Box is marked to the top with Edward VII's initials and The British Agent, Venezuelan Claims Commission in faded gilt.

Either side of the Bramah lock is the maker Wickwar's details noting their 6 Poland Street address and Manufacturers to HM Stationery Office. Wickwar & Co. were well established Dispatch Box makers and had been in business for over 70 years when this box was made. The interior is leather lined and the box has a brass carrying handle to the top.

The Venezuelan Claims Commission was set up in 1903 to arbitrate over compensation sought by both Britain and Germany against Venezuela after the military strongman Cipriano Castro seized the Presidency of the country. Although a number of European citizens and companies had suffered as a result of Venezuela's internal conflicts, Britain and Germany were the most proactive in seeking reparations and repayment of international depts. Castro, believing the USA's Monroe Doctrine would protect him, refused to pay. Britain and Germany, acting together blockaded the Venezuelan ports eventually forcing Castro to seek international arbitration. The British Agent was Gilbert Mellor and the Venezuelan F. Arroyo-Parejo with the American J. Earl Parker the umpire. Mellor was a barrister who served with the City Imperial Yeomanry in the Boer War and progressed to Brigadier General during the Great War.

This Dispatch Box is large in size and can be dated to 1903.

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