

PATRICK JEFFERSON



Item FRENCH GREEN-PAINTED *TÔLE* HELMET LANTERN

Date Nineteenth-century, in Napoleonic taste.

Dimensions Height 22" (56cm) Width 8 1/2" (21.5) Depth 9" (23cm)

Description *The dark-green painted tôle light formed as a helmet, the curved smoke-shade top with foliate decoration above a central rosette, over a curved lantern with a side-opening curved glass door; some restoration and redecoration.*

This unusual wall lantern is designed in the manner of a French cuirassier's helmet and made from of dark-green painted tin-ware, a material known as *tôle* in France.

The twelve regiments of cuirassiers were Napoleon's elite mounted cavalry soldiers, who wore body armour and helmets and used carbines, pistols and sabres, in order to cause the maximum visual impact as well as damage. The Russians called them *zheleznye ludi* (the iron men) and the English were so disturbed by the sight of what appeared to be medieval cavalry that they armoured their own horseguards after Waterloo. The cuirassiers were also dramatically dressed in dark blue coats, a flaming grenade on coat-tails and saddlecloth, red epaulettes and plume attached to their headwear. According to a curious Decree issued on April 7th 1807: "From March 1st to December 1st the cuirassiers have to wear a mustache but must be clean shaven for the remaining 3 months."

The French continued this partial armour, through the Franco-Prussian war, even up to the opening years of the Great War in 1914, which proved to be a hopeless loss of life against the overwhelming force of multiple field cannon.

Price £1,900

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Fig. 1



Fig.2



Fig.3