

GILLES JOUBERT

(PARIS, 1689 – PARIS, 1775)

SUPPLIER TO THE GARDE-MEUBLE ROYAL FROM 1751 TO 1775

BUREAU PLAT



PARIS, LOUIS XV PERIOD, 1ST HALF OF 18TH CENTURY

MATERIAL: OAK FRAME AND TENDER WOOD; AMARANTH VENEER; ORMOLU; LEATHER.

DIMENSIONS:

29 ¼ IN. HIGH (74 CM) - 64 ¼ IN WIDE (163 CM) - 31 ½ IN DEEP (80 CM)

PROVENANCE :

DELIVERED IN 1752 BY GILLES JOUBERT FOR THE APARTMENTS OF LOUIS-PHÉLYPEAUX,
COMTE DE SAINT-FLORENTIN, LATER DUC DE LA VRILLIERE, FOR THE CHATEAU DE
MARLY.

27, Quai Voltaire, 75007 Paris

MARKS AND INSCRIPTIONS:

1686 flanked by a fleur-de-lys underlined with the date 1752 inscribed in ink under the desk (inventory number of the Garde-Meuble de la Couronne) ; N M 947, inscribed in ink beneath the desk (inventory number of the château de Marly used after 1784) ; N Cs 947 / Commun / Gouverneur / N° 8 inscribed in ink on a rectangular label glued below the desk ; letters EC flanked with an oval enclosing three fleur-de-lys under a closed coronet, fire marked underneath the desk, used by the Garde-Meuble Royal during the Restauration (1815-1830), letters EC standing for Ecuries Royales of the rue de Chartres in Paris.



The desk rests on four console legs diagonally set and enhanced with corner mounts shaped as espagnolettes featuring women masks underlined with filets of pearls and flanked with acanthus volutes. They are linked at the bottom to ormolu sabots crowned with acanthus leaves. The delicately curved frieze encloses three front drawers, all three simulated at the back of the desk in the same manner, the central one flanked with a pair of chased clasps highlighted with gadrooned motifs.

The frame is entirely veneered with amaranth. Each drawer closes with an individual lock adorned with a small rococo asymmetrically festooned cartouche. Bronze masks enhance the small sides of the frieze. The serpentine top is lined with a gilt-tooled green leather inserted within a robust molded ormolu border with sumptuous chamfered corners.

**LOUIS PHELYPEAUX, COMTE DE SAINT-FLORENTIN, LATER DUC DE LA VRILLIERE,
MINISTRE SECRETAIRE D'ETAT A LA MAISON DU ROI**



Louis Phélypeaux, comte de Saint-Florentin, later duc de La Vrillière.

Portrait by Louis-Michel Van Loo circa 1769.
Château de Versailles collection.

Louis Phélypeaux, comte de Saint-Florentin, marquis (1725), and finally duc de La Vrillière (1770) was born in 1705. He became one of the most important state men under the reign of Louis XV.

Son of Louis Phélypeaux (1672-1725), marquis de La Vrillière, and of Françoise de Mailly-Nesle (1688-1742), he succeeded to his father in 1725 as ministre des affaires générales de la religion prétendue réformée, which did not prevent him from becoming a free mason in 1735. He married in 1724 Amélie Ernestine, comtesse de Platèn (who died in 1752), daughter of Ernest-Auguste, comte de Platèn et du Saint Empire.

Chancelier and Garde des Sceaux de l'Ordre du Saint-Esprit from 1716 to 1770, ministre d'Etat in 1761, he also held the title of secrétaire d'Etat à la Maison du Roi de Louis XV from 1749 to 1775, and as such detained a record for ministerial longevity. In September 1765, his left hand was amputated following a hunting accident.

After the dismissal of Choiseul, he briefly became secrétaire d'Etat aux Affaires étrangères from December 24, 1770 to June 6, 1771. He was nominated duc de La Vrillière in 1770 before dying seven years later in 1777 without male heirs. He commissioned Jean-François-Thérèse Chalgrin to build between 1767 and 1769 the magnificent hôtel de Saint-Florentin in Paris, currently the United States embassy located 2 rue Saint-Florentin.

LA CHATEAU DE MARLY



Pierre-Denis Martin, general view of the château de Marly and its gardens in 1724

While Versailles was preparing to accommodate the main residence of the king and its court, Louis XIV retained Jules-Hardouin Mansart to develop Marly as his country residence, away from the rigid etiquette of the Court.

The work, started in 1679, had sufficiently progressed by 1686 to allow for the King's first stay, which he followed for the rest of his life by a series of improvements to the park. He upgraded the Rivière or Grande Cascade in 1697-1698, and transformed the Grand Abreuvoir starting in 1698. The park was thoroughly modified during the Régence to lower its soaring maintenance cost.

The château was sold in 1799 during the Revolution to industrialist Sagniel who after his financial demise demolished it together with its outbuildings and sold its material.

The property was acquired by Napoleon a year later, and the domaine de Marly-le-Roi today belongs to the State.