

ABEGG-STIFTUNG

Media release, September 2017

EXHIBITION

13 SEPTEMBER TO 12 NOVEMBER 2017

OPEN DAILY FROM 2 P.M. TO 5.30 P.M.



ARCHIVING WAY BACK WHEN

PAINTED LEATHER POUCHES OF THE 16TH CENTURY

The Abegg-Stiftung is pleased to announce a mini-exhibition of six, elaborately worked leather pouches from the Archives de l'État de Fribourg together with some documents they once contained. As evidence of an old archiving system, these attractive pouches adorned with coats of arms, inscriptions, and textile ornaments are as intriguing, as they are precious. Their place of origin and history are well documented.

During his term of office from 1579 to 1593, Fribourg's state chancellor Wilhelm Techtermann had some fifty leather pouches made as receptacles in which to keep important documents and deeds. Fourteen of these little bags have been preserved in the Archives de l'État de Fribourg and were recently studied and conserved at the Abegg-Stiftung as part of a degree project by a student of textile conservation and restoration.

The exhibition provides an opportunity to see a small selection of these remarkable archiving pouches before they are returned to the archive in Fribourg. The erstwhile contents of two of the pouches are likewise exhibited. First, there is the magnificent deed of the Golden League, an alliance of the seven Catholic cantons agreed in Lucerne on 5 October 1586, which on grounds of its importance was given a lavishly decorated leather sheath of its own, and second, all the Burgrecht treaties of the lords of Neuchâtel. These documents have survived exactly as they were archived in the pouch labelled accordingly; that is to say, folded, which allowed no fewer than eight documents to be stored in a single bag.

Both media release and photo are available as e-mail attachments.

Caption

Archiving pouch with coats of arms arranged in a circle around the Swiss cross (red shield with full-size silver cross). Fribourg, 1586; painted leather, leather drawstrings and ornamental knots, silk fringed border and tassels, 46 x 36 cm; Archives de l'État de Fribourg, bourses d'archives, 8