

From "Memorabilia and Anecdotal Reminiscences of Columbia, SC," Julian A. Selby, Columbia, SC, The R. L. Bryan Company, 1905. Pgs 79-80

### *History of a Gold Snuff-Box*

About the time it was decided to erect the new State Capitol of South Carolina, two brothers, named Hammarkshold, natives of Sweden, came over to America. One of them, an architect and civil engineer, obtained a position with Mr. Niernsee on that work; the other, a mining engineer, drifted to Lincolnton, N.C., and connected himself with Col. Lysander D. Chiles in an enterprise of this nature but they were unsuccessful and dropped out. The mining brother had a beautiful gold snuff-box, presented to him by King Oscar, of Sweden. The top of it was ornamented with flowers and leaves, constructed of precious stones, surrounded by an "O" (Oscar), of the same ornamentation. On settling their mining affairs, the snuff-box came into possession of Col. C., who held it for some time and then decided to sell it; took it to New York and left in (sic) with a prominent jewelry firm to be disposed of. Before leaving the city an intimate acquaintance told him he believed he could get a customer for the box; that it would be necessary to carry it to the party, and suggested that he give him an order on the jewellers (sic) for the valuable box. The party spoke so plausibly about the matter, that Col. C. not only gave him the order, but introduced him to the heads of the firm. The prize was obtained, and Col. C. thought no more of the matter until several months had elapsed, when on visiting the city, he dropped in at the store aforesaid, and casually remarked "No sale for the snuff-box, eh?" "Snuff-box?" was the surprised reply; "why, we have seen nothing of it since the party you gave the order to called and took it away." Of course, search was immediately begun, and the box was found in the hands of a pawn-broker, where it had been "spouted" for \$700. It was recovered, but there was no prosecution --- the Colonel pocketing his chagrin and the box. **Years afterwards, in some legal business, it is supposed, Col. Rion, of Winnsboro, got hold of the valuable but unfortunate article, as it was seen in his possession, or, at least, parties so asserted. Dame Rumor had put forth a report that Col. Rion was a some of the Dauphin of France, the child of the unfortunate Louis XIV and his beautiful Queen, Marie Antoinette, who lost their heads on the guillotine, and the possession of the handsome snuff-box was considered positive proof of the correctness of the surmise.** Without stopping to consider how it would have been possible for the poor boy to have hidden such a valuable prize from the peering eyes of old Samuel, (sic) the cobbler, into whose hands he fell, the gullible mystery-loving public swallowed the story. Col. Rion died, and the box, I am told, was disposed of in New York. All the parties connected with the affair have long since crossed the river. Bad luck has followed the box, but I can trace it no further.