



Presentation Cricket Bat, John Lillywhite

John Lillywhite

£450



REF: 31592

Height: 88 cm (34.6")

Width: 11.5 cm (4.5")

Depth: 5 cm (2")

Description

Antique Presentation Cobbett Cricket Bat with Silver Shield - Victorian Prize Trophy.

A fine and highly evocative Victorian-era presentation cricket bat by Cobbett, offered in very good original condition with attractive colouring and a rich, patina. The bat features rounded shoulders, a flat rounded back, and retains its original thin corded grip, all contributing to its authentic mid-19th century character. The blade is clearly stamped "COBBETT" on both shoulders, alongside "John Lillywhite, Euston Square", with the tip of the handle also stamped "COBBETT", confirming its quality manufacture and prestigious retail association.

Affixed to the bat is a shaped silver presentation shield, finely engraved: "John Lillywhite, Prize Bat, Presented by the B.P.S.C.C, to O. Airn Esq, For The Highest Average, 1863". This inscription firmly dates the bat and elevates it from a fine sporting implement to an important cricket prize trophy with clear historical provenance.

A rare and desirable antique presentation cricket bat, combining sporting history, craftsmanship, and documented Victorian prize provenance-ideal for collectors, cricket historians, or display in a sporting or period interior.

Cobbett was a notable English professional cricketer and later an influential cricket bat manufacturer. Born in Frimley, Surrey, he made his first-class debut for Middlesex at Lord's in 1826 and went on to play extensively for the Marylebone Cricket Club, as well as Middlesex, Surrey, and Yorkshire. A highly regarded all-rounder, he was a right-handed batsman and slow roundarm spin bowler, scoring 1,573 runs and taking 534 wickets in first-class cricket. In 1837, he appeared in the Grand Match at Lord's celebrating the MCC jubilee and the accession of Queen Victoria. He died at his London home aged just 38, while still at the height of his career.

After moving to London, Cobbett was employed by the MCC and later established James Cobbett Ltd., operating close to Lord's Cricket Ground. The company became renowned for its cricket bats, particularly its innovative composite designs following an 1887 patent for an ash frame reinforced with cork and catgut-an important precursor to modern laminated bats.