



12' Presentation Rowing Oar Trophy, Head Of The River 1880

£2,900



REF: 31533

Height: 385 cm (151.6")

Width: 15.5 cm (6.1")

Depth: 8 cm (3.1")

## Description

Antique Rowing Oar - Magdalen College, Oxford, 1880.

A fine and original Oxford University presentation rowing oar, dating from 1880, attributed to Magdalen College.

This full-length oar, measuring over 12 feet, is a traditional example of the commemorative oars presented to college rowing crews. It features gilt calligraphy and two hand-painted heraldic shields - those of Oxford University and Magdalen College.

The Oxford University crest displays a dark blue shield with an open book surrounded by three golden crowns, while the Magdalen College shield bears a striking design of black and white diamonds, topped with a black band containing three white lilies with gold stems and centers.

The signwriting remains in excellent condition, and the calligraphy lists the names and weights of the 1880 crew in beautiful gilt script.

A beautiful and authentic antique oar, presented in original condition, representing a fine piece of Oxford rowing history.

The calligraphy reads:-

Head of the River 1880,

Bow. W.E. Boustead...9-11,

2. W.E.P. Austin...11-1,

3. G.D. Dakyns...10-10,

4. A.E. Staniland...11-6 ½,

5. J.E.I. Yale 11-8,

6. A.C. Wells...11-8,

7. J.H.T. Wharton...11-10,

Str. A.H. Higgins 9-3 ½,

Cox. A.E. Norman 7-8.

Any crew which records four consecutive bumps is said to have 'gained their oars'. The prize being a full-size oar decorated with the names of the full crew in gold lettering on the college colours for each rower.

The cox is given a decorated rudder and the coach receives a decorated wooden shield with a mock-up of the bow end of a boat.

Both Oxford and Cambridge Universities host two university bumps races yearly, each lasting several days. The races are for eights (i.e. eight rowers and a cox), each representing one of the university's various colleges. One of the races is held in early spring and the other in early summer, in Oxford they are called 'Torpids' in the spring and 'Eights' in the summer, in Cambridge these are called 'Lent Bumps' and 'May Bumps'. The leading crews of the Lent Bumps go on to race the leading Oxford Torpids crews at the Henley Boat Races around Easter.

The first attested bumps race took place in Oxford in 1815 and was between two eights from Brasenose College and Jesus College. Twelve years later Lent Bumps racing commenced at Cambridge University. As the Isis and Cam are long narrow rivers, not ideal for normal side by side racing, Bumps racing evolved. The competing crews line up bow-to-stern in order, one behind the other with gaps of about 1½ boat lengths between them. The start of the race commences with the firing of a cannon, the idea to progress up their division by attempting to catch and Bump (touch) the boat in front whilst simultaneously trying not to be

Bumped by the boat behind. The ultimate aim becoming top of the first division and "Head Of The River". When a bump has taken place both of the crews involved in the Bump pull over to the river bank and take no further part in that race, allowing the rest of the division to pass. The only difference is in Torpids where the crew whose boat was Bumped has to continue racing (and is liable...