



Antique Billiard Print Of A Player, John Roberts Junior.
John Roberts

£750



REF: 29027

Height: 52.5 cm (20.7")

Width: 38 cm (15")

Framed Height: 87 cm (34.3")

Framed Width: 68 cm (26.8")

Framed Depth: 68 cm (26.8")

Description

John Roberts Junior Photogravure.

Late 19th century study of John Roberts Junior, billiards player, signed in pencil by John Roberts Junior and the artist Thomas Edward Gaunt.

Roberts died in Worthing in 1919 at 71 years of age, some 24 years after last winning the Championship. In the image Roberts can be seen caulking his cue with the 'Championship of Billiard Challenge Cup' in the background. Published Jan 1st 1891 by Leggatt Bros. 62 Cheapside, London. (Copyright) Printed in Germany. The 'Championship of Billiard Challenge Cup' was presented in 1870 by the three main Billiard Companies at that time, Burroughes & Watts - Cox & Yeman - Thurston & Co. It was won outright by John Roberts Junior in 1890 and given by him to his son.

John Roberts Jr. (1847 - 1919) was a professional player of English billiards and a notable manufacturer of billiards cues and tables, and a great promoter of the sport of billiards.

Taken from billiardsandsnookerarchive.co.uk:-

John Roberts Junior stands out as one of the great Victorians in the world of sport. He was to billiards what W.G. Grace was to cricket, and had billiards continued its popularity, Roberts would be as well known today as his illustrious contemporary.

Son of the first recognised champion of English billiards John Roberts Senior (1823-1893), junior was easily the most commanding figure the game has ever known, both on and off the table. For years he was able to give a third of the game start to any opponent, and won the professional billiards championship on eight occasions, the last in 1885.

He played in front of royalty many times and did countless world tours, including India, where Maharajah of Jaipur made him, for one month play a year, a court billiard player for life, on an annual salary of £100 with expenses. It is likely that John Roberts first came into contact with snooker, during one of these Indian tours.

Roberts was a showman, immaculately dressed, a legacy he has passed down to today's bow-tied players. The other side of the coin however, was to behave as a law unto himself in everything connected with billiards. The governing body and other professionals were waived aside by a sweep of his dictatorial hand. I know one or two players like that today.

He invented the top of the table game at billiards, which combines pots and cannons around the billiard (black) spot. This obviously put him in good stead when he played snooker, as this report from the New World Of Billiards of June 1908 clearly demonstrates.

"Anywhere where the winning hazard (potting) takes precedence, the veteran (John Roberts Jun) can still hold his own with the best of them, and he knows it. He is the very ideal of a great hazard striker, quick and ready. He apparently has the angles of the table deeply cut into his mind. Wherever the winning hazard reigns he has this strong pull over all possible opponents. He developed his talents in the old pool and

pyramid days. In his prime he was easily master of all comers, at a time, too, when hazard striking specialists abounded. His experience has stood him in good stead during the series of Snooker's Pool games. At times he may have given the impression tha...