Antique Thompson Longbow

Thompson Of Meriden

£280

Manfred Schotten Antiques
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REF: 31290

Height: 181 cm (71.3")

Width: 3.5 cm (1.4")

Depth: 4 cm (1.6")

Description

Vintage Thompson Lancewood Longbow
A fine vintage lancewood longbow by Thompson of Meriden, one of England's most respected traditional bowyers. This attractive self-bow is fitted with two horn nocks and features a green braided handle covering. Just above the grip is the maker's stamp, "Thompson Meriden", together with the number 55, indicating the bow's draw weight of 55 lbs. A well-preserved example, it remains in good original condition.
Thompson of Meriden was part of a distinguished family dynasty of hereditary bowyers and fletchers based in Meriden, Warwickshire, long regarded as the traditional centre of England. The village is also closely associated with the ancient Society of the Woodmen of Arden. Over successive generations, the Thompson family earned an outstanding reputation for producing handcrafted longbows and finely made flight and target arrows, supplying discerning archers, clubs, and societies throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. Their work remains highly regarded for its quality, craftsmanship, and contribution to the enduring tradition of English archery.

The bow's length is measured between the string grooves on the nocks.

The longbow came to prominence in the late Medieval period due to the success of the longbow within the military. Bowyers flocked to the City of London aiming to gain work that was increasingly widely available, the reason for this increase in demand can be attributed to success in the battles. Mainly Crecy (1346), Poitiers (1356) and Agincourt (1415), which were accredited to the talent of the English bowmen. In 1363 practising archery was made a compulsory activity for men, and the trade grew further. A system of apprenticeships was introduced for the craft of bowyers, whereby the apprentice was bound to the trade for seven years.
Target archery became popular during the Victorian period (1837-1901), when recreational archery was at its height of popularity. The heydays of archery as a social recreation in the 19th century saw four stand out bow-makers. Of course there were others who, principally makers of umbrellas and fishing tackle etc., added bowery to their repertoires with varying degrees of success; but it was Thomas Waring, Thomas Aldred, James Buchanan and Peter Muir who many turned to for quality and quantity. While Waring, Aldred and Buchanan serviced the English clubs and societies, in Scotland Muir reigned supreme.

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