Walking Stick Horse Measure, Pentillie Castle

£550

Manfred Schotten Antiques
109 High Street • Burford • Oxfordshire • OX18 4RG
01993 822 302 • schotten@sportantiques.co.uk

REF: 32118

Height: 93 cm (36.6")

Width: 12 cm (4.7")

Depth: 2.5 cm (1")

Description

Telescopic Horse Measuring Stick, Walking Stick.
An Edwardian or early-20th-century, good-quality horse-measuring stick, cleverly made in the form of a simulated bamboo walking stick, with a stag-antler handle and its original brass ferrule. The handle pulls upwards to reveal a concealed measuring stick. The brass and wooden measuring shaft is graduated on three sides, with Hands on one side and Feet & Inches on another, measuring up to 1 metre 69 cm. A brass arm incorporating a spirit level opens from the body of the measure, allowing the user to ensure that the measurement is taken accurately and horizontally.

The full length of the stick when extended is approximately 1 metre 75 cm.

The stick has a silver-plated collar, finely engraved: "From John Tillie Coryton to R. Baker, Westover Ivybridge".

The inscription provides a fascinating possible connection with Pentillie Castle, Cornwall. The evidence we have found makes it most probable that the John Tillie Coryton who presented the stick was Captain John Tillie Coryton (1888-1965).
Captain John Tillie Coryton was born on 25 August 1888, the son of William Coryton and Evelyn Annie Parker. His father was associated with Pentillie Castle, and John grew up within the Pentillie family. He became a country gentleman and served in the Rifle Brigade, attaining the rank of Captain. He married Dorothy Parker-Jervis in 1916. Following the death of his father William in 1919, John became the principal Coryton associated with Pentillie and was established there by the 1920s.
In 1932, he was appointed High Sheriff of Cornwall, being specifically recorded as "Capt. John Tillie Coryton of Pentillie Castle, St. Mellion." He died on 30 November 1965, aged 77.

The recipient is also particularly intriguing. A Devon directory from the period associated with the 1871 census records "Baker Robert, colt breaker, Westover" at Ivybridge. A colt breaker was a professional involved in breaking and training young horses. The combination of Robert Baker of Westover, Ivybridge, his occupation as a colt breaker, and the nature of this specialised horse-measuring instrument provides a particularly plausible context for the presentation.

Although the precise date of the gift has not been established, the evidence suggests that the stick is more likely to be Edwardian or early 20th century than Victorian, and that Captain John Tillie Coryton is the most likely giver.

Manfred Schotten Antiques
109 High Street • Burford • Oxfordshire • OX18 4RG
01993 822 302 • schotten@sportantiques.co.uk