

Emmanuel College Cambridge - The Sudbury Prize. A very fine George III Drinking Goblet made in London in 1811 by Emes & Barnard.

Sold



Description

The Goblet stands on a circular pedestal foot decorated with acanthus leaves and displaying the engraving "Aien Apicteyein - To be always the first and famous amongst others". The campana shaped main body displays a lower band of bold lobing and a beautiful frieze decorated with Classical scrolling foliate scrolls and flowerheads, also on a matted ground. The sides then rise to an everted rim and the interior displays fine original gilding. The front of the goblet is engraved with the Armorial of Emmanuel College, Cambridge and the reverse with the contemporary inscription: MDCCCXIII Joan Sudbury nuper Dec Dun: David Cockerton A.B. Coll Emman: The Goblet is in exceptional condition and is well marked on the foot. The quality is outstanding, as would be expected from Emes & Barnard, who made extremely fine pieces during this period.

This piece is a Sudbury Prize issued by Emmanuel College Cambridge. John Sudbury (1604-1684), Dean of Durham, was a considerable benefactor of Emmanuel College, Cambridge where he had acquired his Bachelor and Master of Arts. He later became a Doctor of Divinity at Peterborough College. He was most notably Dean of Durham from 1661 until his death in 1684. In his will he left a sum of money to fund a prize to be given to the best undergraduate of the year in the form a piece of silver. A considerable study of the Sudbury prizes was undertaken by Timothy Kent and published by him in 1996, op. cit.. He cites an entry in the College order book dated 24 April 1677, which records that one sixth of the £500 Sudbury left to the college should be '...laid out upon a piece of plate to be bestowed upon ye most pious and best learned of those that commence the Bachelors each year according to ye judgement of ye Master and four Senior Fellows.'

The college archives also contain a letter written by the illustrious William Sancroft (1617-1693), Master of Emmanuel College from 1662-1664, Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral and then Archbishop of Canterbury, in which he lays out the wording to be engraved on the piece of plate - 'which may best express the original intention of the donor'. To achieve this he employed an Homeric quote which appears twice in the Iliad which when translated can be read as 'always to be the best' or 'always excel', the words of Peleus addressed to his son Achilles as recounted by Nestor, King of Pylos. The first Sudbury Prize was awarded to William Beever in 1676. A number of Sudbury Prizes survive and were recorded by Kent. They include, two handled cups, Goblets, tankards, mugs and salvers, all similarly engraved. A further example, a cup by Thomas Whipham and Charles Wright, London, 1763 was sold at Christie's, London, 15 July 1998. In later years, the sum was added to by a gift from Henry Hubbard. David Cockerton (1790-1866) matriculated at Emanuel College, as a sizar (a sizar was originally an undergraduate student who financed his studies by undertaking more or less menial tasks within his college but, as time went on, was increasingly likely to receive small grants from the college) in 1809. He graduated with his B. A. in 1813. He was ordained as a priest in the diocese of Lichfield and Coventr...