



Seymour Easton. A Gothic Revival Ebonized Tabard Inn Library Revolving Bookcase

Ref: PV003932

Price on Application

PERIOD	Arts & Crafts Movement , 1900-1909
YEAR	1902
STYLE	Arts and Crafts
ORIGIN	United Kingdom
MATERIALS	Oak
DIMENSIONS	H: 79 in (200.66 cm) W: 27 in (68.58 cm) D: 27 in (68.58 cm)
CONDITION	Good

About this piece

Seymour Easton (1859-1916)

A rare ebonized tabard inn library revolving bookcase. An American ebonized on oak version.

Architectural form, with a wonderful tiled roof, above different compartments, and open shelves to hold books. The upper section is carved with "The Tabard Inn, The Best Reading Rooms in the United States are the Homes of the American People." A wonderful carved figure with "Library Notices" carved beside it, and to the middle "With all the Red Tape on the Box" relates to the sturdy black cases sealed with red tape which housed the books.

With further carvings lower down: Fiction, Politics, Commerce and Travel, Science and Religion. The Tabard Inn project was named after the Southwark pub made famous by Geoffrey Chaucer on the first page of the Canterbury Tales - was devised by Seymour Eaton. His idea was for a membership library located in shops across the United States, so you could rent books, at five cents each.

Seyton also sold his idea to W. H. Smith in 1904, using similar bookcases that carry the legend inscribed with the Thomas Carlyle quotation, "The True University of These Days is a Collection of Books." See John Andrews, *The Revolving Bookcase Mystery, Part 2: 26 Years On - An American Dimension*, *Antique Collecting*, May 2006, pp. 48-49.