Emmett & White
ANTIQUES & INTERIORS

Royal National Life-Boat Institution Tinplate Collecting Box, Circa 1920

£395

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REF: 7796

Height: 12 cm (4.7")

Width: 37 cm (14.6")

Depth: 9 cm (3.5")

Description

A wonderfully evocative early Royal National Life-Boat Institution collecting box, dating to circa 1920 and made from painted tinplate in the form of a lifeboat. Measuring an impressive 37 cm in length, it retains its original blue, white, and red painted decoration, including the inscription: "Contributions for the Royal National Life Boat Institution."

The model boat incorporates a coin slot in the deck and a lockable collection compartment below, designed to safeguard donations until they could be collected. Such boxes were placed in shops, public houses, and other public premises, where they served as a familiar appeal for support of the RNLI's lifesaving work around the British and Irish coasts.

The collecting box is accompanied by a paper packet of donor pin badges and is supplied with a recently cut key. Its surface shows the appealing paint wear, patination, and small signs of handling expected after a century of public use-evidence of the object's working life rather than detractions.

A highly displayable piece of maritime and social-history ephemera, combining the charm of a period tin toy with the enduring story of one of Britain's best-loved charitable institutions. A rare survivor with strong visual presence and considerable historical appeal.

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