

SA634644

William V Period Improved Stanhope Lens by Francis West of Fleet Street

Price

Sold**Item Reference: SA634644****Date of manufacture: 1800**

Dimensions

Height = 2 cm (0.8")

Width = 5.5 cm (2.2")

Depth = 2 cm (0.8")

Description

For sale, a William IV period improved Stanhope lens by Francis West of 83 Fleet Street, London. The Stanhope lens so called because it was considered to have been invented by Charles, The Third Earl Stanhope, is a simple microscope comprised of glass cylinder with two convex ends and which could be used for rudimentary scientific investigation. It was popularised due to its easy accessibility to the public in a period when microscopy was a growing phenomenon. Enclosed in a German silver collar and loop, this example is stamped to "West, Inventor" and comes complete with its original black leather hinged case with red velvet interior. It is further marked to "West, 83 Fleet St, London" in gilt lettering to the lid. It is unclear how West improved Stanhope's design but he was known to have been an enterprising character during his life and took full advantage of marketing opportunities. An advert for the lens that appears in the Comic Almanack in 1836 reads: "Christmas - I tell you what? The prettiest trinket and decidedly the most useful present you can make at this season is WEST'S IMPROVED STANHOPE LENS: It is mounted to be worn like an eye glass, in gold, silve...

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