

SA899422

Victorian Cased Green Card Prismatic Compass by Francis Barker & Son

Price

Sold

Item Reference: SA899422

Date of manufacture: 1870

Dimensions

Height = 3 cm (1.2")

Width = 9 cm (3.5")

Depth = 9 cm (3.5")

Description

For sale, a Victorian green card prismatic compass by Francis Barker & Son. Compasses such as these were first patented by Charles Augustus Schmalcalder in 1812 when the development of a prismatic sight and arm was introduced. The addition enabled the user to position the view finder at a specified location using the sight, and simultaneously read the bearing of the compass which is reflected to the eye by the prism. This practical evolution for the compass did not come without controversy as the idea had already been developed by Henry Kater a year earlier. Both men used the famous London instrument maker, Thomas Jones of Charing Cross to manufacture their instruments so it is suggested that Schmalcalder must have seen Kater's design in the Jones workshop. Schmalcalder's prism design was however, the first to achieve recognition through a patent application and remains a standard to this day. With the patent expiration in 1826, numerous other makers began to incorporate this design into their instruments including Francis Barker. This example remains faithful to Schmalcalder's original with its hinged sighting vane and prism which fold flat against the compass bowl fo...

Seller Details

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