

19th century boxwood geometry set

Sold



Description

A 19th century boxwood geometry set with two fitted rulers by W H Harling and other boxwood instruments, circa 1880

William Henry Harling (1830-1895) was a distinguished Victorian instrument maker whose name became synonymous with precision and quality in drawing and surveying tools. Beginning his career in 1846, Harling opened his own business in London in 1851 at Finsbury Pavement. His workshops later expanded to Hackney and Grosvenor Works, while his retail shops remained in central London, notably Hatton Garden and Finsbury Pavement.

Harling specialized in mathematical and drawing instruments, gaining a reputation for craftsmanship and innovation. His firm produced high-quality brass and steel instruments used by engineers, architects, and surveyors. After his death, the company continued as W. H. Harling Ltd., adapting to changes in design, including the transition from traditional to flat-pattern instruments in 1929. By the 1960s, the company merged with Blundell Rules, further cementing its legacy in British instrument-making history.

Today, examples of Harling's work are preserved in museum collections, including the Science Museum, London, where his finely made sets illustrate the artistry and precision of 19th-century scientific craftsmanship.