

Gallery 2

Tabletop Refracting Telescopes



Gallery 2

TABLETOP REFRACTING TELESCOPES

The telescope signage (Column 2) is reproduced here to be as close to what is engraved on each signed telescope as my current computer font selection can approximate; see photos for actual signage.

The optical tube length (OTL) is a gauge for the reader to assess the size of the telescope from the photographs. For this Gallery it is the length of the largest diameter tube on the instrument and includes the end cap or sunshade (ss), if present, at the objective lens end, but it does not include any extensions at the eyepiece end of the telescope such as a rigid extension of the OTL, eyepiece tube, or a prism.

Coll. ID	Gallery 2 TABLETOP REFRACTING TELESCOPES (18)	Circa	Obj. Diam. Nom.	Optical Tube Length OTL	Finder	Tube Material	Tripod Mount
TRA1	DOLLOND + LONDON	1866	2 3/4"	43 1/4"	yes	brass	altazimuth
TRA2	HARRIS, & C ^o , 50 <i>Bathurst</i> , London	1816-1839	3"	43 1/4"		2-piece brass	altazimuth
TRA3	NEGRETTI & ZAMBRA LONDON	1880	3 1/8"	44 3/4"	yes	brass	altazimuth
TRA4	DANCER MANCHESTER	1850	2"	26 1/2"		brass	altazimuth
TRA5	<i>Post in Wien</i>	1840	2 1/4"	21"		brass	altazimuth
TRA6	TROUGHTON & SIMMS, London	1840	2"	24 1/2"		brass	altazimuth SM
TRA7	<i>Gregory Gilbert & Co. London</i>	1790	1 1/4"	3 7/8"		brass	altazimuth
TRA8	J.H. STEWARD 406&66 Strand&54 Cornhill, LONDON, <i>Made in</i>	1875	3 1/2"	55 3/4" 8 1/4" ss	yes	brass	altazimuth
TRA9	<i>Steinheil in Munich</i> No. 29012	1900	3 3/8"	41 5/8"		brass	novel equatorial
TRA10	<i>The PANCRATIC Eye etc. Invented by Wm. Rowland MID Bland London</i>	1825	2"	10.5" - 47"	7-draws	brass, mahogany	altazimuth
TRA11	DOLLOND * LONDON	1780-1800	2 3/4"	43"	yes	brass	altazimuth SM
TRA12	<i>J. Ramsden London</i>	1763-1795	1 1/4"	6 1/4"		brass	altazimuth
TRA13	Dollond LONDON	1761-1766	3.0"	42 3/4"		2-piece mahog taper	altazimuth
TRA14	LINGR CHAVALLIER OPTICIEN DU ROI A. PARIS	1796-1820	1 3/4"	22"		brass	altazimuth
TRA15	ROSS, LONDON.	1830-1859	3 1/2"	45 3/4"	yes	brass	altazimuth SM
TRA16	<i>Refract in Wien</i>	1850?	1 5/8"	3.25" - 9"	3-drw.	brass	altazimuth
TRA17	W. & S. Jones 50, <i>Redcross</i> London	1800-1860	2 1/8"	29 1/8"		mahogany	altazimuth
TRA18	<i>Mery and Sohn in München</i>	1847	3"	47 1/2"		mahogany	altazimuth

Gallery 2

Tabletop Refracting Telescopes



Dollond
TRA1



Ross
TRA15



Steward
TRA8



Negretti & Zamboni
TRA3



Troughton & Simms
TRA6



Dollond
TR11



Steinheil
TRA9



Harris
TRA2



Plossl
TRA5



Gregory Gilbert
TRA7



Plossl
TRA16



Dancer
TRA4



Chavelier
TRA14



Ramsden
TRA12



Dollond
TRA13



Merz und Sohn
TRA18



Jones
TRA17



Dollond/Kitchiner
TRA10

Gallery 2

Tabletop Refracting Telescopes

Tabletop or library refractor telescopes were quite common in the mid to late 18th century and remained in common use well into the 19th century. In several respects they were much easier to use than a floor-standing telescope, and that convenience of use was optimized in the tabletop reflectors (as we will see later in Gallery 4), which generally had a shorter tube length and could have a much larger optical aperture. Another factor leading to the tabletop telescope was the absolute requirement for a stabilized image that was not possible with the handheld spyglass telescope. As soon as the magnification approached about 15x a method of stabilizing the telescope was essential.

One can imagine that these telescopes were used on a table near an open window as dusk arrived and the planets and stars began to appear in the evening sky. Or perhaps a small table was taken out of the house and placed in an opportune location for viewing without nearby obstructions. I suppose that one could even imagine the telescope being used to examine surreptitiously a neighbor's recently acquired new horse-drawn carriage with all its accessories including the surrey fringe and carriage candle holders.

Often a tube projecting well beyond the objective lens was used for shading the objective during day use, and as the evening came on it served a second function as a shield against dew condensation on the objective lens. See for example TRA8.

Within this Gallery there are several important telescopes. The Ross, Steward and the Steinheil are the larger instruments with objective lenses approaching 100 mm while the little Dollond (TRA10) and the Gregory Gilbert (TRA7) are diminutive tabletop telescopes, both sporting unique eyepieces, the Kitchiner's Pancratic eye tube and a 4-lens turret, respectively. TRA13 Dollond is one of the earlier telescopes in the collection. This combination font Dollond signature is seen only three times in this collection and it is early; it was used just after John Dollond died. The rack and pinion focus mechanism is also rare (see detailed photos for TRA13). Furthermore, the two-piece tapered mahogany optical tube is seldom found, however, within this collection there are five including FRA25, FRA29, TRA13, HRA23, and HRA30). If brass tube construction is included, there are three more 2- and 3-piece optical tubes, FRA7, FRA18, and TRA2.

Telescope Type: Tabletop Refracting	Country of Origin: England
Maker: George Dollond (on case label)	Signature: DOLLOND + LONDON
Date: c. 1813-1851	Objective Diameter: 2 3/4-inch (70-mm) OTL: 43 1/4"
Condition: Very good/Excellent	Accessories: 2 ter. and 4 cel. eyepieces, SM altazimuth mount fitted mahog. storage case
Comment: Rare + symbol in signature	Wolf Collection ID: TRA1 Gallery: 2



Telescope Type: Tabletop Refracting	Country of Origin: England
Maker: William Harris and W. Campbell	Signature: HARRIS, & C ^o . 50 Holborn London
Date: c. 1816-1839	Objective Diameter: 3-inch (75-mm) OTL: 43 1/4"
Condition: Excellent, beautiful telescope	Accessories: ter. eyepiece, lens cap, mahogany storage case
Comment: 2-piece, screw together tube	Wolf Collection ID: TRA2 Gallery: 2



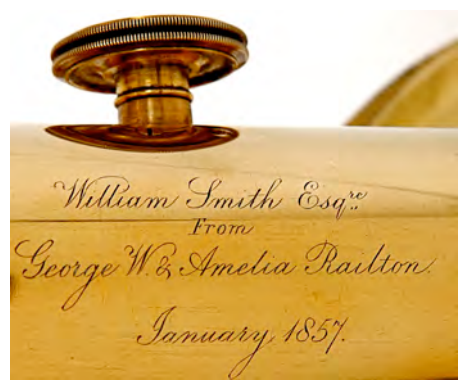
Telescope Type: Tabletop Refracting
Maker: Henry Negretti and Joseph Warren Zambra
Date: c. 1880
Condition: Very good/Excellent
Comment: Beautiful tabletop scope

Country of Origin: England
Signature:
Objective Diameter: 3 1/8-inch (80-mm)
Accessories:
Wolf Collection ID:

England
NEGRETTI & ZAMBRA LONDON
OTL: 44 3/4"
Finder with cross-hairs; 1 ter. 2 cel
brass end cap; nice storage case
TRA3
Gallery: 2



Telescope Type: Tabletop Refracting	Country of Origin: England
Maker: John Benjamin Dancer	Signature: DANCER, MANCHESTER
Date: c. 1841-1857 (date of engraving)	Objective Diameter: 2-inch (50-mm) OTL: 26 1/2"
Condition: Very Good	Accessories: Lenses 1 ter; 1 cel; and case
Comment: 1857 gift engraving	Wolf Collection ID: TRA4 Gallery: 2



Telescope Type: Tabletop Refracting	Country of Origin: Austria	
Maker: Simon Plossl	Signature: <i>Plossl in Wien</i>	
Date: c. 1840	Objective Diameter: 2 1/4-inch (57-mm)	OTL: 21"
Condition: Very Good	Accessories: two eyepieces marked 1 and 2	
Comment: Beautiful veneer case	Wolf Collection ID: TRA5	Gallery: 2



Telescope Type:	Tabletop Refracting	Country of Origin:	England
Maker:	Edward Troughton and William Simms	Signature:	TROUGHTON & SIMMS. <i>London</i>
Date:	c. 1840	Objective Diameter:	2-inch (50-mm) OTL: 24 1/2"
Condition:	Very Good	Accessories:	Lenses 1 ter; 2 cel, SM control; silver medallion, Hershel wedge and case
Comment:	Good Provenance	Wolf Collection ID:	TRA6 Gallery: 2



Telescope Type:	Tabletop Refracting	Country of Origin:	England
Maker:	Gregory Gilbert & Co.	Signature:	<i>Gregory Gilbert & Co. London</i>
Date:	c. 1840	Objective Diameter:	1 1/4-inch (32-mm) OTL: 3 7/8"
Condition:	Very Good	Accessories:	4-lens turret eyepiece, solar filter
Comment:	Special engraving; scope stores within optical tube	Wolf Collection ID:	TRA7
			Gallery: 2



4-lens turret with solar filter



tripod legs fold up and all components store within the optical tube

Telescope Type: Tabletop Refracting	Country of Origin: England
Maker: J. H. Steward	Signature: J.H. STEWARD, 406 & 66 Strand & 54 Cornhill, LONDON Maker
Date: c. 1875	Objective Diameter: 3 1/2-inch (90-mm) OTL: 55 3/4"
Condition: Very good to Excellent	Accessories: Pancratic 3 ter., 5 cel., star & Herschel diags., finder w/brass cpver, objective brass cover, 7" sunshade, 3 stablizers, mahog. storage case
Comment: Large, impressive tabletop	Wolf Collection ID: TRA8 Gallery: 2



Telescope Type: Tabletop Refracting	Country of Origin: Germany
Maker: Carl August von Steinheil	Signature: <i>Steinheil in München, No 29012.</i>
Date: c. 1900	Objective Diameter: 3 3/8-inch (85-mm) OTL: 41 5/8"
Condition: Very Good	Accessories: 50x ter.; 5 cel., and star diagonal; adapted small mahogany lens box
Comment: Complete; heavy base. robust	Wolf Collection ID: TRA9 Gallery: 2



Telescope Type: Tabletop Refracting	Country of Origin: England
Maker: Peter and John Jr. Dollond	Signature: <i>The PANCRATIC Eye tube, Invented by Wm. Kitchiner, MD Dollond London</i>
Date: c. 1780-1825	Objective Diameter: 2-inch (50-mm) OTA: 10 1/2" - 47"
Condition: Very Good	Accessories: 1 ter; wood screw for field use
Comment: 7-draw w/Kitchiner Eye Tube; pancratic or variable mag.	Wolf Collection ID: TRA10 Gallery: 2



Telescope Type: Tabletop Refracting	Country of Origin: England
Maker: Peter and John Jr. Dollond	Signature: DOLLOND * LONDON
Date: c. 1780-1820	Objective Diameter: 2 3/4-inch (70-mm) OTL: 43"
Condition: Very good/Excellent	Accessories: Pancratic ter; 6 cel; Kitchener pancratic and 6-lens turret eyepieces; SM altazimuth control; fitted mahogany storage cases
Comment: Many accessories, impressive	Wolf Collection ID: TRA11 Gallery: 2



Telescope Type: Tabletop Refracting

Maker: Jesse Ramsden

Date: c. 1763-1799

Condition: Good

Comment: novel linear screw focus

Country of Origin: England

Signature: *J Ramsden London.*

Objective Diameter: 1 1/4-inch (32-mm) OTL: 6 1/4"

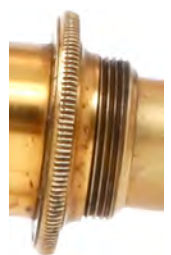
Accessories: 1 ter; 1 cel (stores in compass mount); wood screw for field use

Wolf Collection ID: TRA12

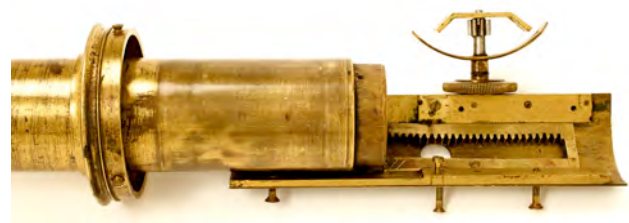
Gallery: 2



Ramsden London



Telescope Type: Tabletop Refracting	Country of Origin: England
Maker: Peter Dollond	Signature: Dollond <i>LONDON.</i>
Date: c. 1761-1768	Objective Diameter: 3-inch (76-mm) OTL: 42 3/4"
Condition: Good	Accessories: 1 ter. and screw on brass end cap
Comment: Early; 2-piece mahogany tube novel rack-and-pinion design	Wolf Collection ID: TRA13 Gallery: 2



Pinion drive assembly (sitting upside down) just above the rack and mounting plate assembly. Note the hole, partially hidden, in the rack insertion plate for receiving the pinion drive assembly.

Telescope Type: Tabletop Refracting	Country of Origin: France
Maker: Jean Gabriel Augustin Chevallier	Signature: L'ING ^R CHEVALLIER OPTICIEN DU ROI A PARIS.
Date: c. 1825-1830	Objective Diameter: 1 3/4-inch (44-mm) OTL: 22"
Condition: Very Good	Accessories: 1 ter; and storage case
Comment: Nice, small French telescope	Wolf Collection ID: TRA14 Gallery: 2



Telescope Type: Tabletop Refracting

Maker: Andrew Ross

Date: c. 1830-1858

Condition: Excellent

Comment: One of the nicest made telescopes in the collection

Country of Origin: England

Signatures: ROSS, LONDON and ROSS, London

Objective Diameter: 3.5-inch (90-mm) OTL: 45 3/4"

Accessories: 1 ter.; 3 cel. eyepieces; 4 color filters; finder, brass end cap; nice storage case

Wolf Collection ID: TRA15

Gallery: 2



Overview



Upper: altitude adj. Lower: azimuth adj.



Sign. near focus knob



Objective

cap



Lens set



Filter set



Sign. on altitude hub

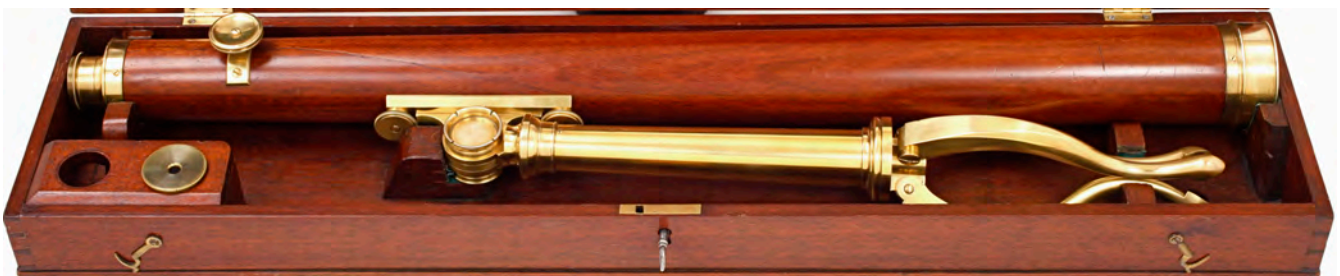


Wood storage case

Telescope Type:	Tabletop Refracting	Country of Origin:	Austria
Maker:	George Simon Plossl	Signature:	<i>Plossl in Wien</i>
Date:	c. 1850	Objective Diameter:	1 5/8-inch (41-mm) OTL: 3 1/4"-9"
Condition:	Very Good	Accessories:	4-lens eyepiece turret; orig. gutta percha cover for wood screw
Comment:	Powerful little telescope	Wolf Collection ID:	TRA16 Gallery: 2



Telescope Type: Tabletop Refracting	Country of Origin: England
Maker: William and Samuel Jones	Signature: W. & S. JONES, 30 Holborn LONDON
Date: c. 1800-1860	Objective Diameter: 2 1/8-inch (54-mm) OTL: 29 1/8"
Condition: Very good/Excellent	Accessories: 1 terrestrial eyepiece w/solar filter beautiful mahogany storage case
Comment: 22-inch long eyepiece tube	Wolf Collection ID: TRA17 Gallery: 2



Telescope Type: Tabletop Refracting	Country of Origin: Germany
Maker: George and Sigmund Merz	Signature: <i>Merz und Sohn in München.</i>
Date: c. 1846	Objective Diameter: 3-inch (76-mm) OTL: 47 1/2"
Condition: Very Good	Accessories: 1 ter&3 cel w/solar filter: and case
Comment: Rare	Wolf Collection ID: TRA18 Gallery: 2

