



Antique Ballot Box By George Kenning Of London

Sold



REF: 29728

Height: 31 cm (12.2")

Width: 27 cm (10.6")

Depth: 23 cm (9.1")

## Description

### George Kenning Ballot Box.

A beautiful antique 19th century mahogany ballot box, most probably used in a masonic lodge, a gentlemen's club or even a golf club to vote in new members. The ballot box with a gilt inscription 'YES' and 'NO' above two drawers with a circular central aperture to accept the votes, balls. Comes complete with a selection of small wooden balls, light and dark. To the rear is an ivory label 'Kenning. ManufacR. London. Liverpool. Manchester & Glasgow'. George Kenning was himself a Freemason and a manufacturer of gold, silver, and tinsel lace ornaments, fringes, trimmings, braids, tassels, gimps, cords, wires, straps, thread, twist, plate etc. He also executed embroidery in gold, silver, and worsted. He furnished the regalia and every requisite for the various societies, was a Masonic jeweller, clothier, and publisher, and supplies banners, flags, bannerets etc.

Committees would have used the box for a secret vote or 'ballot' using the balls to register the votes, white balls accept, and black balls reject. This is where the term "black ball" is thought to have originated. The drawers at the bottom would then be pulled out, votes counted, and the result announced.

An excellent ballot box in original condition with wonderful colour and patina. Last image shows the ballot box with another one we have available #29664, priced at £680.

### The Makers of Highest Quality Masonic Regalia And Accessories

Acquired by Toye & Co. during 1956/7, and became Toye, Kenning & Spencer Ltd. during 1962.

Since the foundation of Freemasonry in England and Wales just over three hundred years ago, the most prominent name of the many suppliers to emerge during those years was George Kenning, who having worked for Edward Stillwell and Sons, during the 1840s, moved and established a business under his name in 1860, setting up in number 1 to 4 Little Britain, in the City of London, to pursue his ideas that the Stillwells had rejected!

From there George Kenning's business rapidly expanded with major manufacturing of textiles in Coventry, with over 800 Looms, and many other ancillary machines of the day producing Braiding, Gold and Silver Wyre Drawing for hand embroideries, employing in that one establishment alone, over 400 employees (finally destroyed during the 1940 great blitz of Coventry, being so near to the Cathedral, when the Company was re-established at a semi derelict factory in nearby Bedworth; with just 13 looms recovered in pieces, reassembled to resume production for the war effort).

Already in London large production facilities had been developed at twin buildings at numbers 1 to 4 Eagle Wharf Road, a then Company freehold site with a large Company car park, between the buildings; the one building was a full four storey metals manufactory; the other of equal size for textile, including machine embroidery.

Branches were set up around the country in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Manchester and elsewhere.

George Kenning greatly enlarged both his capabilities in manufacture, covering many markets, to all Civil and Military Personnel, Shipping lines, the growing Sports and Club Markets and many other Societies.

This was achieved by George Kenning producing his ow...