

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON A SLIDE RULE BY ALBERT NESTLER DISCUSSED DURING A WORKSHOP OF THE DUTCH CIRCLE OF SLIDE RULE COLLECTORS ON FEBRUARY 23, 2025

Jean-Paul Hild had the following questions:

1. When was it manufactured?
Seems to be of SOHO type but I couldn't find other Soho rules from Nestler.
2. Why are the scales deferred? (see picture)

Link to the inquiry/workshop:

<https://www.rekeninstrumenten.nl/workshop/JeanPaul1/index.htm>

Summary:

The slide rule is a model No. 3. The manufacturer is Albert Nestler. Model No. 3 was offered in the time frame from 1905 to 1921. The present model was likely manufactured toward the later part of this period. It is probably an export model intended for a French-speaking market.

The inquiry was based on the following images:

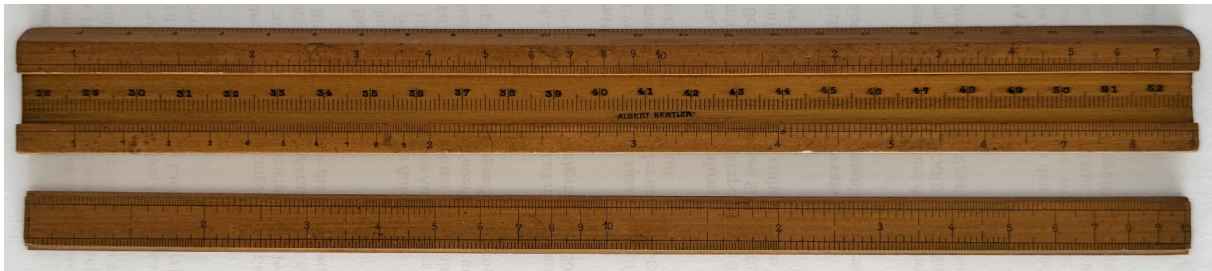


Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

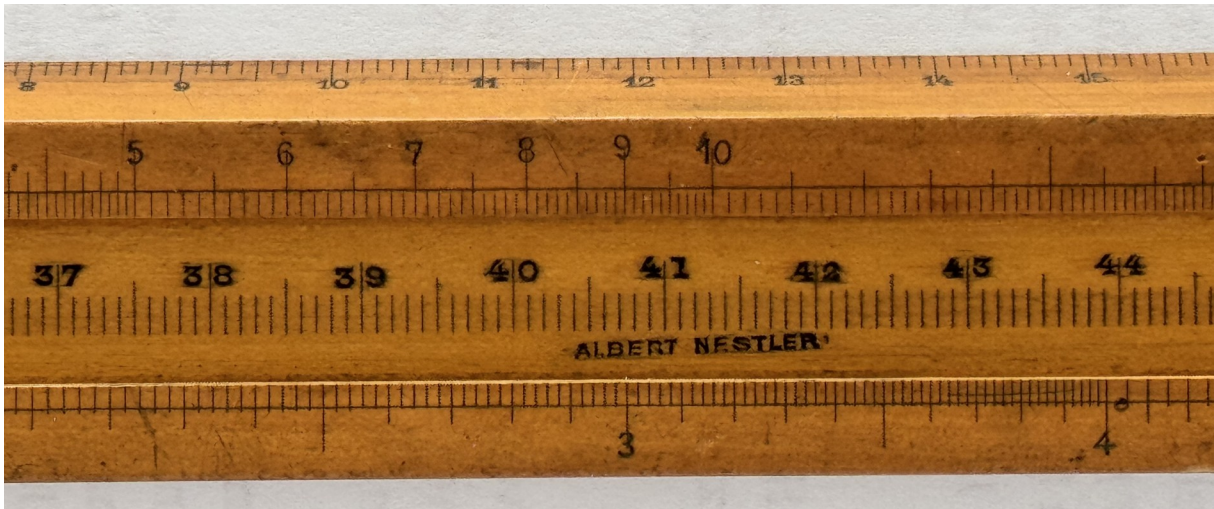


Figure 4

For further assessment, the following images were also consulted:



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9

The Slide Rule:

Made of boxwood

Company logo "ALBERT NESTLER" in the well

Scale layout typical of SOHO slide rules

Scales on the body are incomplete (related to full decades)

Centimeter scale on the facet

Internal centimeter division in the well

Scales on the slide are complete (two decades)

S / T / L scales on the back of the slide

No special markings like π or $\pi/4$

Table on the back in French, right side incomplete

Total length approx. 25.3 cm

The Incomplete Scales:

The original total length of the slide rule was 27.5 cm, as evidenced by the internal centimeter scale. The division length corresponds to 25 cm. With the original total length, the beginning of the logarithmic scales would have started about 1.25 cm from the left edge of the body. With the actual length of ~25.3 cm, the remaining length for the scales is ~24.05 cm. This results in the following approximate maximum values for the logarithmic scales:

$$A_{\max} = 10^{\left(\frac{24,05}{12,5}\right)} = \sim 83,95 \text{ and } D_{\max} = 10^{\left(\frac{24,05}{25}\right)} = \sim 9,2$$

These values can be found as approximate maximum values on the respective scales.

My Assumption:

The slide rule was manually shortened on the right side at some point. This theory is supported by the appearance of the body's cut surface (Figure 8) and the fact that the sticker on the back is frayed and thus incomplete (Figure 3). The left side of the body still shows typical traces of machine processing with a circular saw (Figure 9).

The owner subsequently decided to shorten the slide so that it matched the total length of the body. To do this, modifications were made on both the left (Figure 9) and right sides of the slide (Figure 8).

Some Thoughts on the Age:

Determining the age of a slide rule from Albert Nestler is always a challenge for collectors. Albert Nestler only began stamping the delivery date onto the slide rules in the mid-1950s. One must therefore rely on other features. However, the number of features available here is quite limited.

Model No. 3 with the SOHO scale layout and made of boxwood was offered between 1905 and 1921. At the beginning, the total length of the slide rules was 26 cm. From 1911 onward, this length increased to 27 cm. It is not clearly verifiable when the length further increased to 27.5 cm. The images in catalogs published after 1911 all used the same illustrations. Notably, all catalog images show a typically curved Nestler pi symbol, which is missing here.

My Assessment:

SOHO slide rules from Albert Nestler are rare finds. In fact, aside from the specimen discussed here, I know of only one other. See <http://tinassliderules.me.uk/Slide%20Rules/Nestler%203.JPG>
Despite its damage, I consider this slide rule a collectible item, if only because of the rarity of SOHO slide rules from Albert Nestler.

A Note:

At the beginning of slide rule production, pieces from French production were "copied." This may also explain the similarities in trigonometric scales with other manufacturers. The manufacturer's proximity to France may also explain the French table. However, it is also possible that Albert Nestler sourced the pieces directly from France as trade goods.

Further research would be necessary here.

Andreas Faßbender
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