

Number 11
March 1997



British Horology Times

NAWCC CHAPTER 159

Douglas Cowan
Paul Odendahl
Editors

VOTE YOUR
NAWCC BALLOT
VOTE
BEFORE THE
END OF MAR. '97

TO THE
FORGETFUL
ONES!

This will be your last issue
of BH Times unless Doug
receives your 1997 dues by
the end of April '97

NEXT MEETING: April 11, 1997 in Cincinnati.
"Something a little different."

Our formal meeting will be Friday PM, April 11, 1997 at the Southern Ohio Regional in Cincinnati. There will be no program for this meeting. Instead, **you're invited** to our home for an open house: 7 PM to 10 PM on Thursday, April 10. The entertainment there will be myself trying to explain why I purchased the items in our collection. (My wife Jean certainly always gets a laugh from the attempt.) Members and spouses only, please, and you must phone (513-821-7569) before April 5th so that we can give you directions, plus obtain the right amount of food and drink. Our home is about 20 miles north of the regional site. **WE HOPE YOU'LL COME!**

**You're
Invited**

-Doug Cowan

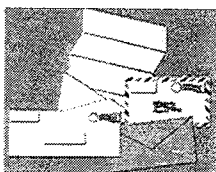
**Editor's
Corner**



The Times front page now shows our Publisher Paul Odendahl as co-editor. This is simply recognition that he has been doing more and more of the finished setup and styling of our newsletter. I will continue as the focus for MART ads, letters and articles so keep sending those things to me.

After using our supply of "technical" items in the larger December issue, this one is used to publish letters from members. Hope you enjoy them. Next issue we plan an article about musical clocks, though this always depends upon what else "comes in". -Doug Cowan, Editor

RECOIL



From David Penney (UK)

FAKE TOMPIONS

In the article about what may be a fake Tompion watch the term "Dutch Fakes" is used. This is really a most misleading term whose origins are not known to me. Suffice to say that it would be best forgotten.

Such "fakes" were in fact made in Switzerland and often put into English hallmarked cases for retail-

ing in various different markets. Those that followed the English style, often with arcaded minute tracks on the dial, were aimed at Holland and the Northern European market. They were engraved with such imaginary English names as *Tarts* and *Sampson*, or real names such as *Eardley Norton*.

Switzerland also supplied watches for the Scandinavian market with names such as *Neveren* and *White*. These are of a different

style, often with very thin sprung silver caps, more reminiscent of Swiss or French work, but were marked "London". The English provincial market was also supplied but in this instance they would be engraved with the name of the actual retailer, so they cannot be properly regarded as fakes.

Later in the nineteenth century the "New World" of America provided a rich market for the Swiss who again used various real and imaginary "London" names. *Tobias* fakes have recently been well documented, but *Barraud* named items can be found as well as *Arnold Adams*, a name that is unknown this side of the Atlantic.

It can be said that the Swiss would supply any style of movement in any quality (not all fakes are of poor quality) engraved with any

See *FAKE TOMPIONS*, page 5

TRUSTED

For information of a further example of Trusted's Patent Repeater see *Antiquarian Horology*, September 1961, pp 234-235, and I am sure that *Clocks* magazine has featured an example at some time within its pages, though the lack of an adequate index has meant that I am unable to find the refer-

ence. I enclose a photocopy of Charles Trusted's Patent abridgement No 2148 taken out in 1796.

As for the observation that these clocks "may have been made for the American market", I rather think that the strength of the dollar in much more recent times is a more likely reason for the present whereabouts of the three mentioned by the author. ☺ -David Penney

A.D. 1796, November 24.—N^o 2148

TRUSTED, CHARLES.—A timepeater to strike the hours and quarters. The hour barrel is a barrel with a wheel fixed to it, on which are twelve pins to strike the hours, and on the cylinder part of the barrel are twelve pins diagonally placed in two arrangements, to stop against a stud fixed in the sliding rack; this stud governs the number of strokes. To tell the hour of the night, a brass wheel with a corded edge, which is screwed upon the end of the barrel arbor, must be turned backward until the stud stops against such of the pins as corresponds with the hour, and then must be turned gently forward, and the hammer will strike the proper hour upon the bell. The aforesaid sliding rack has 24 teeth, and is worked by a pinion of 10 teeth in modern or flat watches, and of 8 teeth in old watches, where 6 turns of the fusee are required. On the outside of the rack are 12 divisions for the 12 hours. To set the machine in the evening, the graduated divisions of the rack must be set to correspond with the hour.

When there is a quarter barrel, the hour barrel must be made longer. After the last stroke of the hour is struck, the hour barrel communicates the acting force to the quarter barrel by pins acting against each other. The quarter barrel is very similar to the hour barrel; the pinion and rack being respectively of 20 and 48 teeth in modern or flat, and of 16 and 48 teeth in old watches.

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HOROLOGICAL TOUR TO ENGLAND IN MAY 1996

By Ken Johnston (NY)

As soon as I received my copy of *British Horology Times* Number 7, December 1995, read about the tour and phoned England, I was hooked. This was to be the second UK tour that Philip Priestley has arranged, this time on behalf of New York Chapter 13.

The itinerary of the tour has been reported several times in the *Bulletin* so I need not reiterate here. I have, however, summarized the places we visited on a chart. One tremendous advantage of going as a group is the people. Naturally all have a common interest, though with different specialities, and going as a group we get the exclusive attention of museum curators who give the

conducted tour and in many cases show additional collections not normally available to the public. I have tried to convey this on the chart.

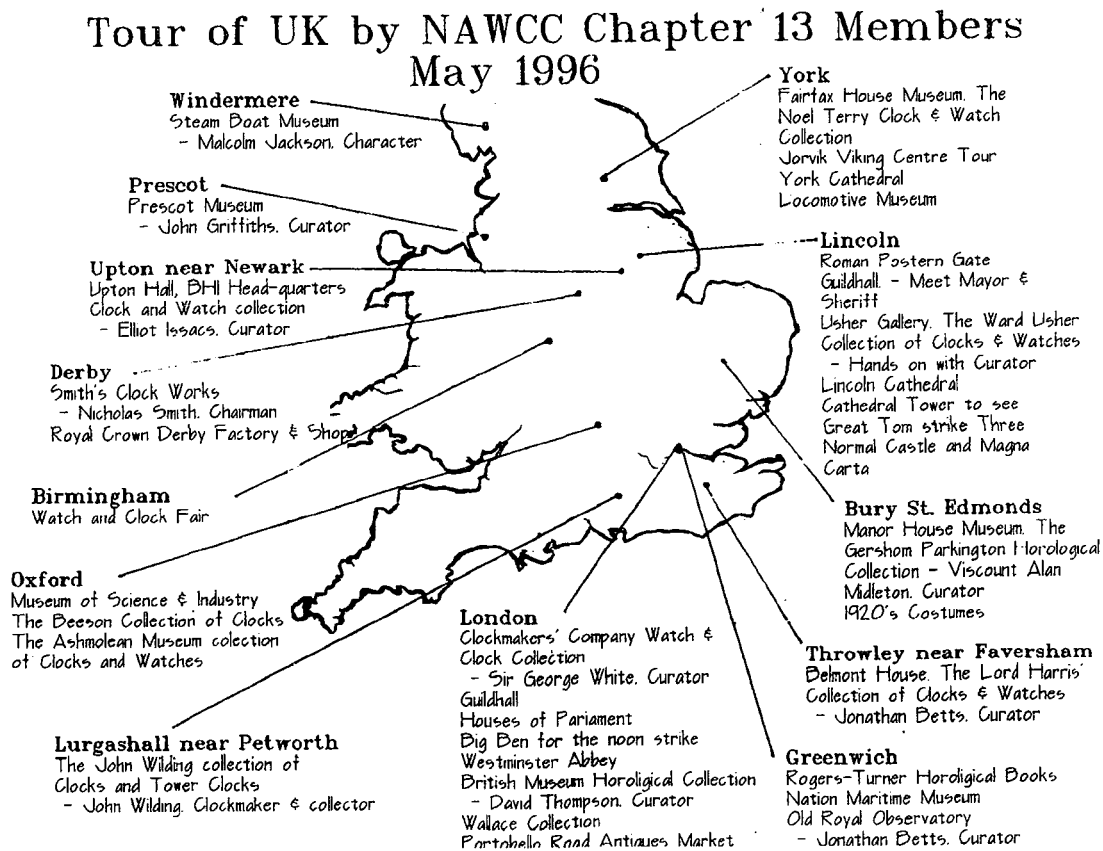
The tour was not altogether confined to museums and the like. Many of the meals were in spectacular locations: The King's Arms at Amersham featured in the film *Four Weddings and a Funeral*; Upton Hall, the Headquarters of the British Horological Institute; Jews House in Lincoln; and Wax Chandlers Livery Hall, a London trade guild whose first charter was granted in 1484 by the ill-fated and much maligned Richard III.

Other, non-horological places of interest included: Shopping in

London and Oxford; a tour of the Palace of Westminster (Houses of Parliament); Jorvik Viking Center, the Cathedral, and Locomotive Museum at York; meeting with the Mayor and Sheriff in the Guildhall at Lincoln; a complete non-horological weekend at Windermere including the Steam Boat Museum and a ride on the lake.

Philip and Jean Priestley offered a really wonderful tour. A tour that takes a lifetime of experience to put together. A tour I can thoroughly recommend. ☺

Editor's Note: In addition, Philip is willing to plan a "heavy duty" horology tour if there's enough interest. That tour will have less sightseeing and more horology. It will take a year to arrange and require thirty participants. Write to me if interested. -Doug Cowan



THE EMOTIONAL PLEASURES OF TIMEPIECES

By Leonard T. Orsini (NY)

No collector can deny that at least one of his or her possessions means more than just being a possession. We've included two articles which reveal this very well. The first, by member Len Orsini concerns grandfather clocks. The second article is a fictional recreation of checking the accuracy of your pocket watch in New York city's Times Square in 1884. Enjoy! -Editor

CLOCKS

Sometimes an old clock can provide you with much more than simply time.

Midnight usually comes to a seacoast home in silence, settling in unnoticed. Out by my parlor though, a sentinel stands, ready to herald this arrival with majesty and grace. Its unseen hands move slowly, but without pause, testament to the infinite. The gentle whirl of a flywheel gives way to the sound of turning gears as all is readied for the clock's strike. Stillness departs as each peal bounds full bodied, deep and unhurried throughout the house. The twelfth tone lingers, previous overtones adding to its fullness, but it too, slowly hollows into the returning calm. I doze once again, warm and comfortable in bed. The clock will go on monitoring the night just as it has the ages.

No quartz accuracy here; no split second precision. Only the feel of history, the flow of time. What need along the seashore for the thousandth of a second? It's

the continuum rather than the instant that's of value. So if the hourly radio tone and my clock's toll aren't exact, I don't rush to adjust matters. It's close enough.

Standing in front of this seven foot antique you are dwarfed by its mass. You must peer up to see the face, now a bit scarred by hairline scratches around the arbors where the key winds the weights. Still, its broad countenance is well preserved with burnished brass embossed numerals and a monthly calendar.

Each outer corner of the face depicts a season with outdoor activities. In soft pastel now flecked by time, the blacksmith hammers in winter, directly across from the farmer plowing his field. While the landowner gathers leaves for burning, the cooper assembles barrels in the summer heat. No computer salesmen or movie stars appear, thankfully.

When you rub the rich carvings you feel mahogany over a century old under your fingertips. You are literally touching the past. Just under the colossal finial but above the face sits the

arch for the moon phase dial. It is easy to imagine the first owners in England raising a candle to see the hour and then continuing upward to check the position of the moon — essential knowledge then for users of both plow and sail.

Today we're trying to sort what's essential, what's of value. Often we find it's cheaper to buy a new item rather than repair the old, a fact bespeaking volumes about the supposed quality of the original. This is what makes the clock in my home so endearing. It reflects an era when design and function courted each other, with a marriage of endurance the result. You don't part with a grandfather clock; it is passed along as a cherished possession.

Its imposing presence is the first you see as you enter and the last as you leave. Santa's cap adorns it at Christmas and at least a couple of colored eggs will be stashed within at Easter. The soft cadence of its pendulum is unexcelled company for a book and my contemplative pipe.

And, yes, I get the time. But more importantly I have the time placed in perspective. On an object from the past I note the present — and pause. In a world where change is rampant, the clock serves as an enduring, placid link to the long ago when the buffeting seas of uncertainty and doubt raged less harshly, or so it seems. Doubtless, values from the past, like craftsmanship, would weather as well now. Seeing this reminder daily, I find midnights are not quite so dark along my scant stretch of the shore. ☺

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THE EMOTIONAL PLEASURES OF TIMEPIECES: NEW YORK CITY, 1882

WATCHES

Several men suddenly stopped on the walk, stepped to the curb, pulled out their watches and then stood, heads thrown back, staring up and across the street, watches still in hand.

Even while I was wondering about it, more men stepped to the curb, dragging watches from their vest pockets. And within less than a minute hundreds of men lined the curb of Broadway for blocks, glancing from the open watches in their hands to the roof of one of the tallest buildings along here.

The roof was a shingled many-gabled complexity of windowed pyramid-shaped towers of various sizes. Rising from their center and highest of all was an ornate square tower surrounded at its base by a fenced walk.

WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH CO. was painted in a circle on the side of the tower and now I saw that a great many of the wires lining the street originated from this rooftop. A flagpole rose from the roof of the tower, an American flag fluttering rapidly from it; and at the top of the pole directly below the flag I saw a bright red ball. The ball was made with a hole through it apparently, like a doughnut. It surrounded the pole and must have been visible up there for miles around.

I didn't know what was going

on but I got out my watch — two minutes to twelve it said — and stood like the hundreds of other men all up and down Broadway as far as I could see. Suddenly, and there was a simultaneous murmur, the red ball dropped the length of the flagpole to its base and the man next to me murmured, "Noon, exactly." He carefully set his watch, and I did the same, pushing the minute hand forward. All around me I heard the clicks of the covers of gold watches snapping shut. The hundreds of men at the curb turned and became part of the streams of pedestrians again, and I was smiling with pleasure.

Something about this small ceremony, momentarily uniting hundreds of us, appealed to me mightily. ☹

These words are extracted from the novel Time and Again by Jack Finney, 1970

FAKE TOMPIONS, from page 2

name or country, for retailing wherever the population had the money to spend on watches, and particularly where "bargains" were sought. The Metropolitan Museum in New York has a fine collection.

I would add that I have never yet seen a Dutch made watch that bore a fake English name, and that the presence of a balance-bridge is not in itself an indication that the watch is a fake, nor is the presence of a balance-cock an indication that a watch is English made. See *Technique and History of the Swiss Watch* by Eugene Jaquet and Alfred Chapius, Plate 55 and others.

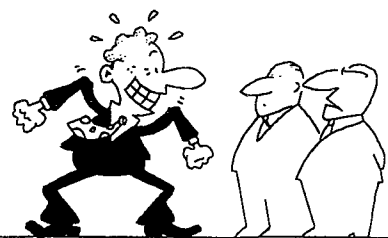
Lastly, I cannot but smile when I hear the modern Swiss watchmaking houses complaining about the faking of their top brands, something at which they led the world for over two centuries! ☹ -David Penney

MART

MART ADS are free to members and should pertain to to British or Anglo-American horology.

WANTED. Watchpapers and all epherema concerning clock and watchmaking. Duplicate material available for trade if preferred.

David Penney, Groons Cottage, Elsenham Hall, Elsenham, Herts, CM22 6DP, England. Telephone 011-441-1279814946; Fax 011-441-1279814962.



"C'mon fellows -- get busy and vote!"

MORE PLACES TO VISIT IN BRITAIN

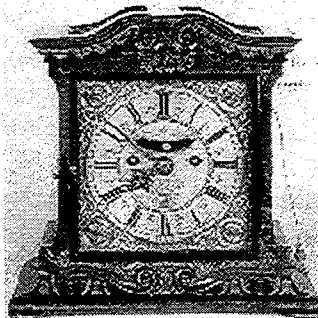
By Trevor Beatson (Canada)

Here are a few places for you to include in the English Horological Circuit:

Belmont House at Belmont Park in Kent. Sorry, but I don't know exactly where it is (we were driven there in a bus), but I'm sure the British Tourist Office will know. It's the Lord Harris Collection. If you are interested in early English clocks, this is the collection. About 200 clocks in all but only about half are on display at any one time. In the front hall you can see longcases by Tompion, Quare, Knibb, Seignor, and the rest of the house includes examples by East, Fromanteel, Graham and numerous others. This is a must see.

Ashmolean Museum and the **Oxford Museum of the History of Science** — both in Oxford. You'll see a good range of early local clocks and watches.

Liverpool Museum. Not too big but a very comprehensive collection including an astronomical clock by Richard Bond of Boston, Mass. USA. While in the area visit the **Lady Lever Collection** at Port Sunlight and the **Prescot Museum** of English watchmaking. Both are well worth a visit. ☺



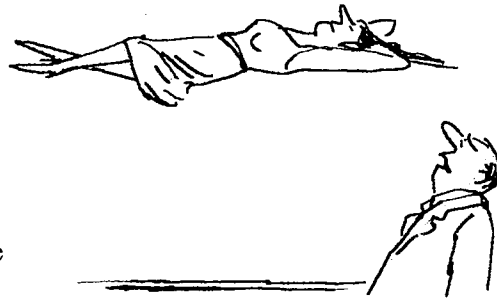
THE APPEALING SQUARE

And by Paul Odendahl (LA)

In York there is a discovery waiting to be made. The **Noel Terry Collection of Furniture and Clocks** is in Fairfax House, Castlegate, York. Noel Terry had a passion for English furniture and clocks and he assembled his collection beginning in 1918 which gave him an advantage over you and me. Family confectionary money was the means. It remains a private collection. Admission is charged.

On my one and only visit I could hardly leave the first room encountered after reception. There in one corner stood an imposing month going longcase clock by Thomas Tompion, walnut veneered, about 7 feet tall. I couldn't take my eyes off it. But there were many more gems on two floors, 12 in all including East, Knibb, Jones, Quare, Windmills, and Graham. Want more? How about 17 watches mostly from the 18th century.

I play games. I sometimes greedily ask myself which one I would like to have, and I don't mind telling you that my choice at Fairfax House was a little 11" marriage: a 2-train Quare movement with false pendulum, calendar aperture and four subsidiary dials. The later carved marquetry case was unlike any period piece I know of, but somehow I found it almost as appealing as a beautiful woman. What do you think? ☺



"Follow me, George, I'm headed for the open house in Cincinnati."

(Thursday, April 10 from 7-10 PM. Be sure to phone 513-821-7569 before April 5.)

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