



# British Horology Times

NAWCC CHAPTER 159

News

FROM CHAPTER 159

We had an excellent program at the National Convention in Houston. Doug Caulkins spoke, with good slide support, on the subject of watch winders, now known as watch keys. We learned a good deal about the differences in style by period, and I myself saw again at least one fine key that I foolishly sold to Doug many years ago.

We had several pleasant surprises at the Houston Banquet and two that pleased me most were the awards won by Tom (Star Fellow) and Sonya (Gold Certificate) Spittler. These key members of our Chapter have worked tirelessly for conventions, chapters and the Association for many years. Well done!

The pictures accompanying these notes are from a March 1999 expedition to London by Curt Davenport and myself. The purpose was heavy duty watch research and shopping. We found good shopping with specialists at Portobello Road, but otherwise the pickings were thin. Sotheby's auction was not as impressive as I have previously seen, especially in terms of quality. For example, virtually every longcase was a marriage or a victim of poor restoration. Trade buyers claimed that they can't sell these so



CURT MAKES A NEW FRIEND. FROM THE LEFT, FDR, CURT DAVENPORT AND SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL. THEY MAY BE WAITING FOR THE WATCH SHOP IN THE BACKGROUND TO OPEN. IT IS CARTIER, BOND STREET, LONDON.



IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM'S STUDENTS' ROOM. PHIL PRIESTLEY, BRITISH MUSEUM'S JEREMY EVANS AND DOUG COWAN EXAMINE TOMPION WATCHES.

weren't buying, but they were mostly all there and somebody was buying, albeit at prices that reflected the overall quality. One wonderful English carriage clock by McCabe sold for about \$40,000 while the watches sold at reasonable, but not bargain, prices. My advice continues to be "Shop in England for variety or rarity -- but never price". And warm thanks for the hospitality and support from members Phil and Jean Priestley. Curt and I spent several hours with one or both during our stay.

-Doug Cowan

## EDITOR'S CORNER

Here are glad tidings. Two, in fact. First, how happily insulated we are, with our mechanical clocks and watches, from the much publicized worries about Y2K problems. If the lights go out, if the ATMs close down, if your computer crashes, if you can't buy gasoline, and so on and on with all the horrible Y2K thoughts—just think: you can proudly tell the time of day if you keep those clocks and watches wound.

Second, this the happy time when you get the opportunity to help support your Chapter with annual dues. If a Dues Notice came with this issue of BHT please send your dues to the Treasurer. Thank you.

-Paul Odendahl

## A WATCH BY WM. MASON, WARWICK

Douglas Cowan (OH) discusses the watch and its unusual regulator.



FIGURE A. A VERGE WATCH BY WM. MASON, WARWICK. THE CASE IS HALL-MARKED BIRMINGHAM 1813 WITH THE MAKER'S MARK *WH* (WILLIAM HOWARD, COVENTRY, 3 FEB. 1813)

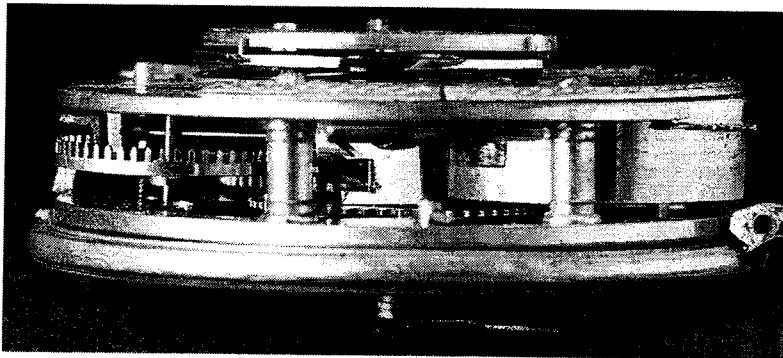


FIGURE B. TOP PLATE DIAMETER IS 1.65 INCHES. PILLAR HEIGHT IS 0.23 INCHES.

Member Ken Johnson sent these excellent pictures to me several months ago and I've now found a great way to use them. Two ways, actually. The first is the illustration of an unusual, though not rare, transitional regulating system which was used from about 1800 to 1815, though isolated examples may be found for an additional 15 years. It was not the normal system, existing side by side in the marketplace with the dying out "Tompion" regulator and the newly popular "Bosley" regulator.

Here's the explanation. From ca 1700 English watch regulators were of the so called "Tompion" type. The main distinguishing characteristic was a circular, silvered and numbered

**BRITISH HOROLOGY TIMES**  
IS A NEWSLETTER OF  
BRITISH HOROLOGY  
CHAPTER 159 OF THE  
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
WATCH AND CLOCK  
COLLECTORS

British Horology Times is published  
3 times yearly by  
THE ROYAL ARCHIVISTS  
340 South Diamond St.  
New Orleans LA 70130

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Opinions expressed in articles in this newsletter are those of the writers and are not necessarily endorsed by the Chapter and/or by the newsletter and/or by the National Association.

Annual membership costs: USA \$5; Canada \$5 overseas \$6 — in US funds or equivalent.

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British Horology Chapter 159

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setting disc, activated by the watch's key (see article in BHT18 *Testing a Tompion Timepiece* for picture). This system adjusted the balance spring curbs by way of a rack and pinion arrangement.

From about 1800 the main English watch regulators were of the so called "Bosley" system. This system is indicated by a pointer, is finger set, and reads on a shallowly engraved arc upon the top plate. The rack and pinion arrangement was eliminated.

But Ken's watch is a halfway step. The Tompion regulator (at 7 o'clock position) is smaller and not silvered or numbered. Nonetheless it is still turned by key to regulate the watch and the regulator setting is now indicated on the "Bosley" finger and scale at the 5:30 position. I must confess that years ago I owned such a watch and thought the blued, unnumbered circular disc was simply a leftover feature, without mechanical function.

Now why use such a system after the perfectly functional "Bosley" was known? Remember, virtually all of these watches were from the Prescott area, so makers certainly knew what each other were doing. My guess is that some watchmakers didn't fancy the idea of clumsy owners pushing the "Bosley" regulator finger, yet wanted the easier to read Bosley regulator scale. Thus the combination of the two systems.

The second use for Ken's pictures is to exhibit a very good quality workingman's watch of the ca 1810-30 period. You can compare this to some of the watches we've shown in the past, to see the differences from watches of 100 years earlier. The verge escapement is still king, though about to lose its place to the lever escapement, and duplex, rack

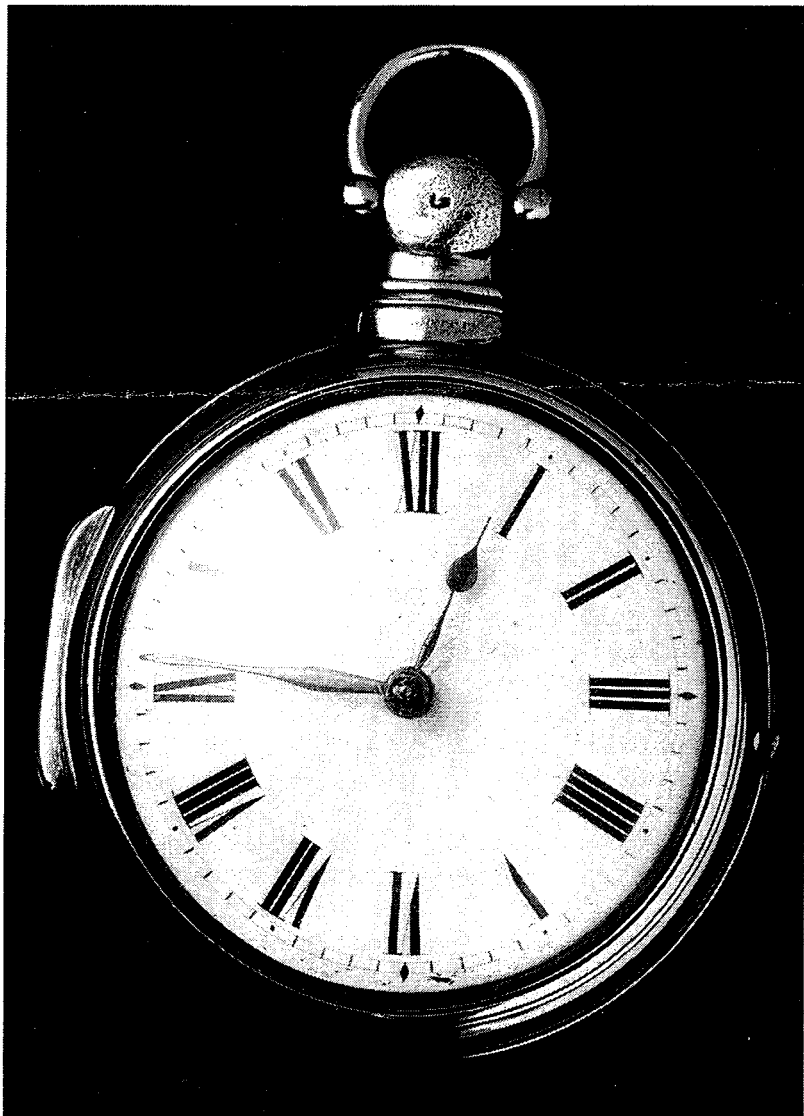


FIGURE C. "MASON, WILLIAM, WATCH AND CLOCKMAKER, FIRST FOUND AT JURY STREET, WARWICK BOTH IN 1811 CENSUS AND RATE BOOK. HE CONTINUED THERE TO THE EARLY 1830s. HE HAD MOVED TO LEAMINGTON BY 1835." -CLOCKMAKERS OF WARWICK AND LEAMINGTON BY WILFRED A. SEABY.

lever, cylinder, and even spring detent watches were competing for customers' attention. This watch, except for the unusual regulation system, is very typical of its type, with a solid footed cock, still nicely pierced, and cylindrical pillars with nice rings to dress them up. The outer case is slightly earlier in style, having a prominent hinge. Most pair case watches by then had a hinge

which was virtually flush with the case. The wide pendant, and gold or black spade hands are usually seen after 1800 as in this watch.

All in all, a very nice watch to show and own. Thanks, Ken. ☺



Doug Cowan, NAWCC's First Vice-President is a student of clocks and watches, as well as a prolific writer on the subject.

## THE EARLY ROLE OF CLOCKMAKERS IN THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF DOMESTIC BAROMETERS IN LONDON IN THE LATE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

Previous research and articles by [Stuart Kelley \(VA\)](#) have led him to bring this subject out of obscurity.

**H**enry Jones has been described (Ref. 1) as one of the outstanding clockmakers of the seventeenth century. He was born in 1632, and apprenticed to Edward East in 1654. Henry Jones was in the enviable position of learning his craft during the most critical, formative period of the industry, and he was learning it from Edward East, one of the major practitioners of the craft. Henry Jones completed his apprenticeship under East on July 6, 1663. He is best known for his bracket clocks and his longcase clocks, but he made watches and lantern clocks as well. A summary of the life and work of Henry Jones may be found in Refs. 2 and 3. Henry Jones worked on the Fleet Street side of Falcon Court in London. According to the Rate Books of St. Dunstan in the West (Ref. 1), he probably stayed there until his death in 1695, as there is no evidence that he ever moved from this address.

Although best known for his clocks, Henry Jones also played an early role, although small and somewhat embarrassing, in the commercialization of domestic barometers in London around 1680. Prior to that date, barometers were few and far between. They were mostly in the hands of a few scientifically oriented researchers who used them for measurement of heights or in experiments with the air pump. The barometers up to this date were rather plain, unattractive, and gener-

ally unsuited for domestic use. In the 1670s, Francis North (1637 - 85), Baron of Guilford and Lord Chancellor during the last years of Charles I's reign, like his fellow barometer researchers, had difficulty understanding the correlation of the movement of mercury in his barometer with the weather. Lord North reasoned that the weather correlation could be discovered if barometers were made more available. In the words of the Hon. Roger North, his brother (Ref. 4), "Accordingly he sent for Jones, the clock-maker in the Inner-Temple Lane; and having shewn him the fabrick, and given him proper cautions in the erecting of them, recommended the setting them forth for sale in his shop; and, it being a new thing, he would certainly find customers. He did so, and was the first person that exposed the instrument to sale publicly in London. But his Lordship, perceiving that his business lay in other operations he was more used to and that he began to slight these, sent for Mr. Winn, a famous instrument-maker over-against his house in Chancery Lane, and did the like to him, who pursued the manufactory to great perfection, and to his own no small advantage; and then others took it up, and few clockmakers, instrument-makers, cabinet-makers and diverse other trades were without them always in their shops, ready for sale." According to Goodison

(Ref. 5), it seems that a good supply of domestic barometers was available to the public in the mid 1680s, and that the weather correlation was understood widely by 1688.

This account of Lord North's commission to Henry Jones to produce quantities of domestic barometers does not indicate the date of the commission. Goodison (Ref. 5) inclines towards the period of 1678 - 80. No barometers by Henry Jones are known to survive. He could not have made many if "his business lay in other operations he was more used to." It is likely that Lord North approached Henry Jones because he had a reputation as an exceptional clockmaker, and possibly because he had made and sold quality instruments other than clocks. It was not unusual for a clockmaker to make products other than clocks; Thomas Tompion, Daniel Quare, and John Shaw of Holborne, for example, are known to have made fine sextants and barometers. Earlier, in 1667 (Ref. 5), a number of instrument makers were admitted to the Clockmakers' Company since there was no other guild which could protect their interests. A close association between the two trades existed during Henry Jones' working life, and many clockmakers made barometers and other scientific instruments.

I infer that in 1678 - 80 Henry Jones attempted to broaden his product line to items other than clocks, perhaps overextending himself in the process. After unsuccessful attempts at commercializing the domestic barometer, he replied to Lord North that his business lay with clockmaking. I sus-

pect that Henry Jones then redoubled his efforts in what he perceived as his specialty, that of clockmaking, for it is from this time (1680) onward that he accepted more and more apprentices, thus entering what has been described as his second, and more commercial, phase of clockmaking (Refs. 2 and 3). Henry Jones has been given credit for starting domestic barometer production in London, but recent authors say the credit is undeserved, and belongs to Henry Wynne. Nevertheless, Jones did take the first steps toward the commercialization of domestic barometers in London around 1680.

Henry Wynne, the man who successfully commercialized the domestic barometer in London was not unknown to the clockmaking profession. He was apprenticed to the Clockmakers' Company in 1654, freed in 1662, and died in 1709. He held several offices in the Clockmakers' Company, including Master in 1690, immediately preceding Henry Jones in that office (Ref. 6). In Ref. 7, Loomes lists Henry Wynne as a maker of mathematical instruments. The Clockmakers' Company records him as an "ironmonger" in 1671. Wynne is known for his sundials, including one erected by Charles II at Windsor, and he is recorded as having produced a pendulum watch for the King, suggesting he enjoyed a reputation as a quality clockmaker. Wynne had seven apprentices, three of whom are listed by Goodison in Ref. 5 as having made barometers. Of Henry Jones's fourteen apprentices, though, none are listed in Ref. 5 as having made barometers. This is surprising, for the production of domestic barometers blossomed into a lucrative trade during the latter part of the Seventeenth Century, and many clockmakers capitalized on the sale

of this new instrument. Could it be that Henry Jones was so soured by his barometer experience that he convinced every one of his apprentices to avoid such work? It would seem so. Henry Jones was not making domestic barometers at a time when Tompion, Quare, Shaw, and other clockmakers were catering successfully to this public need. I wonder why.

Some of Daniel Quare's clocks have a close affinity with the work of Henry Jones, some with Knibb or Tompion. This poses problems when trying to identify which clocks were actually made by Quare, for he used the productions of other makers (Ref. 8, p. 370). Figure 4 of the article on Jones in Ref. 2 shows a very early phase-one Henry Jones clock whose case is remarkably similar to a unique, phase-one special clock by Joseph Knibb (Ref. 9), and also similar to one by Daniel Quare (Ref. 10). The same casemaker may have made all three cases. In his early years (Ref. 8, p. 425), Henry Jones seems to have used the same casemaker as did his former master, Edward East (see the clocks pictured in Ref. 8, p. 416). Simple convex moldings are a feature of Jones' cases and are seen around the tops of these cases. These moldings remained a feature of Jones' cases for some time, as did the simple molding around the bottom of the cases. This seems to suggest he was able to use the same casemaker continuously. His casemaker may well be the man to whom Jones turned to produce the cases for his few domestic barometers, and he may be the man who made a number of barometer cases for Tompion and Quare. ☺

## References:

1. Percy G. Dawson, *The Iden Clock Collection*, Antique Collectors' Club, Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1987.
2. C. Stuart Kelley, *British Horology Times*, Number 16, November, 1998.
3. C. Stuart Kelley, *British Horology Times*, Number 17, March, 1999.
4. Hon. Roger North, *The Life of the Right Honorable Francis North, Baron of Guilford*, 1742, page 295.
5. Nicholas Goodison, *English Barometers 1680 - 1860*, Antique Collectors Club Ltd., Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1992 ed., page 30.
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9. Ronald A. Lee, *The Knibb Family Clockmakers*, Manor House Press, Byfleet, Surrey, Color Plate IV, page 80, 1964.
10. Tardy, *La Pendule Francaise, 3me partie*, page 624.

C. Stuart Kelley, a physicist, is a frequent contributor to BHT. He shares his interest and research in the details of English clocks and their makers.



From: D M Penney FBHI  
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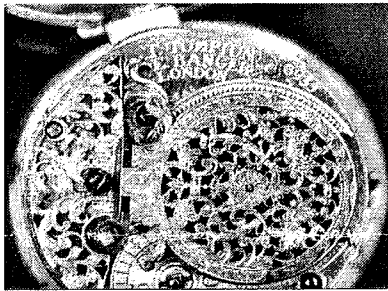
Herts, CM22 6DP, England

re: Tompion & Banger, No. 3935  
and Thomas Mudge

To the Editor,

Many watches have been recased and redialled for various reasons and this of course affects their originality which should be reflected in their present value. Regarding the Tompion & Banger watch in the article by Curt Davenport in the May issue of British Horology Times, I would like to add a few comments on the topic of originality that may add to the points mentioned by Doug Cowan in the same issue.

As originally supplied, the joint on the movement would have had two knuckles, making up part of a 5-knuckle movement joint. As clearly seen in the picture on page five, this is now a solid piece within a 3-knuckle joint. In Tompion's time this piece



TOMPION & BANGER NO. 3935



would have been riveted to the pillar plate. Later in the century it would more likely be riveted or even screwed, in the best work, to the brass edge.

This cheaper style of joint is often encountered when the watch has either been recased or, worse, married to a case in more recent times. Such work is very rarely gilded, whereas the original movement joint would have been firegilded along with the pillar plate.

By 'cheaper' style, I should explain that this would often have been at the request of a past owner who was cashing-in on the value of any gold while, after recasing, retaining a wearable watch. Materials were expensive (especially gold) and labour was cheap throughout the 18th century.

At this time, the standard single case always accompanied a front wind movement and it is only cheaper recases (or marriages) that resort to a revolving circular latch placed on the outside of the case in order to exclude dirt entering via the winding hole. Further, I have always regarded a 'consular' as opposed to a 'single' case to be one that has the 'box', the bezel and an opening back mounted on the same joint. This style of case has a fixed dome with winding hole and was used by John Arnold and others later in the 18th century.

Lastly, I would like to ask members to add the name of Thomas Mudge to the search for clocks and watches by Tompion and Graham.

For much of the time that Jeremy Evans at the British Museum has been working on Tompion and Graham, I have been working on a book about Thomas Mudge and we have enjoyed sharing information about George Graham, to whom Mudge was apprenticed in 1730. Contemporary accounts of Mudge and his work are very rare and I am keen to document every aspect of his work and that of the Mudge & Dutton partnership. He is a most important watchmaker and any information would be most gratefully received and duly acknowledged.

Sincerely

David Penney

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[From the US use the prefix 011,  
omit the + sign and omit the  
(0). -Editor]



Editor's Note: David Penney's responses to BHT articles are always helpful and educational. Assuming that he implies the Tompion & Banger watch to be recased, Curt Davenport is conducting further research regarding that issue.

## contents

### NEWS

The Houston National. A visit to England

### EDITOR'S CORNER

Glad tidings

### A WATCH BY WM. MASON

By Doug Cowan

### CLOCKMAKERS AND BAROMETERS

Stuart Kelley uncovers little known facts

### RECOIL

David Penney writes from England.  
Mart. Next Meeting

# MART

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

From Doug Cowan, phone 513-821-7569:

FOR SALE, Clocks magazines from the 70s. After forming a complete set I still have about 50 extras. \$2.25 each plus mailing.

WANTED, Now I want to complete my set of AHS journals. I especially need issues newer than Volume 14.

### NEXT MEETING

Orlando FL during the afternoon of

Friday, Feb. 18, 2000.

Please consult your Regional program when you arrive.



### IT'S DUES TIME!

If your envelope label shows 1999 please send \$5 for U.S. and Canada, \$6 overseas to Bernie Pollack, 1932 Sunlight Ct., Oceanside CA 93056.