



British Horology Times

NAWCC CHAPTER 159

NEWS FROM CHAPTER 159

Thanks to members Ganczarczyk and Busch of Canada, and Odendahl our Editor, for writing the articles in this Newsletter. My duties at NAWCC are starting to press and I'm really glad to have more writers on board. I know at least two more writers who are tuning up some masterpiece performances for future newsletters. What can you contribute? Interesting anecdotes, cartoons, old advertisements — we can use them all.

Awards. I don't think I've done a very good job of recognizing the achievements of Chapter 159 members, but I surely could not miss these. All of the Star Fellow awards presented by President George Orr during 2000 went to Chapter 159 members and are well deserved. Those honored were Jim Connell, Ralph Fletcher and Bill Keller. Also Paul Heffner, the Answer Box Editor, has won the Gibbs award for writing excellence. In future if you win a horological award in NAWCC or elsewhere, phone or email me and I'll make sure we recognize you. In that vein, we thank Roger Gendron for his contribution to NAWCC of the funds to buy a library book copier to non-destructively copy book pages. Roger will also be our guest speaker at the April 2001 Chapter meeting in Cincinnati.

Annual Meeting. We had a really fun meeting at Philadelphia, with a great turnout, especially considering our early morning timing. Lots of credit goes to the appeal of our guest speaker Jeff Darken, Editor of Antiquarian Horology. He spoke with good slide support on the examination of "virtually original" lantern clocks from the seven-

teenth century — rare birds indeed.

Treasurer Bernie Pollack reported a bank balance of \$2000 and membership stands at 229.

We voted to donate a good quality pair-case verge watch to the new West Coast Museum and to pass the hat to help pay for it. \$180 was raised this way after which member Irene Hartwick donated one free of charge. Those Canadians are great, eh? This watch was a clean George Graham, London! Calm your pulses, it was by a later George Graham in the early 1800s.

However this windfall didn't last long since a misunderstanding about expenses resulted in Jeff being "out" in expense money for his trip to Philadelphia. Secretary Frank Del Greco motioned that we pay this shortfall as a goodwill act, especially since Jeff is an important worker in the NAWCC London Seminar in October. I canvassed the other officers via email and phone, and receiving unanimous assent, sent a check to Jeff. We can't afford to "pay" our guests in this way so will be more careful in future to clarify what is expected of us, if anything.

Elections. How time flies! We will elect new officers in July 2001 for three year terms and I will not be able to run. NAWCC business will fully occupy my time. If you wish to run for any office please let me know. The offices are: President - chairs the 3 annual meetings at regionals and keeps an eye on what the Chapter should be doing; Vice-President - arranges the guest speakers for the meetings; Secretary - must be able to attend most meetings, sends

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EDITOR'S CORNER

This issue of BHT is unique in that it is a 12-pager. It is also unusual in that it contains two articles by two of our Canadian members. You might reply: "Oh, yes, you're the Editor. You arranged it that way." I can assure you that there was no arranging. It was a coincidence; the articles just fell into place. There's more. Imagine my surprise to find that the two Canadian articles had "leading characters" from within 40 miles of each other in England. H. Samuel's first branch shop was in Preston and "452" hails from Winster near Kendal. This struck me as extraordinary. Is there a Guiding Hand in the background weaving threads into this unique, unusual, extraordinary issue?

- Paul Odendahl

IF ONLY I COULD TALK!

But he does talk - to us through **Jack Busch (Canada)** and in a friendly and engaging way he tells about himself, his family and his memories.

My name is "452". I was crafted in the clock workshop of Jonas Barber at Winster, England in the year of our Lord 1758 (Fig. 1). Whether I was made by Jonas Barber Sr. or Jonas Barber Jr. (or both) is open to question. You see, about 1757/58 Jonas Barber Sr. became ill and was only able to do limited work at his bench until his death in 1764. However I do know this: I have Jonas Barber Jr. pillars and also the four rings engraved on my strike arbor is a feature of clocks made by Jonas Barber Sr. The engraving of these rings



Fig. 1. Restored case and movement of the Jonas Barber 30-hour clock, 1758.

ceased entirely on his death in 1764. Before I tell you more about myself, let me give you a brief history of the Barbers of Winster and the features which help identify a Barber clock.

There were actually three Jonas Barbers. The two who are of interest to us are Jonas Barber Sr. and Jonas Barber Jr. from the Winster valley. The other Jonas Barber of Ratcliffe Cross, London was the uncle of Jonas Barber Sr.

Jonas Barber Sr. was born in 1688 in or near Skipton and was trained as a clockmaker by his father John. He moved to the Winster valley about 1708 and settled in Bowland Bridge as early as 1713. In 1717 he married Elizabeth Garnett of the parish of Windermere. They lived at Bowland Bridge, where he carried on his clockmaking trade until 1727 when he bought Bryan Houses and moved to Winster. He was 38 at this time. Here he set up his clock workshop where clocks were made until the death of his son Jonas Barber Jr. in 1802.

Jonas Barber Jr. was born at Bowland Bridge in 1720. He trained as a clockmaker under the supervision of his father whom he joined in a partnership arrangement about 1745, three years before the composite signature came into use and the numbering of clocks commenced.

The most interesting and important facet in the story of clockmaking by the Barbers' partnership of Winster was the practice of numbering their clocks from 1748/49 until the death of Jonas Barber Jr. in 1802. This practice grants them a more lasting place in the history of clockmaking than other and perhaps

greater clockmakers have achieved. In addition, many of their clocks were dated. This numbering system covers a period of over 50 years of the 18th century. It is possible therefore, to date numbered but undated clocks accurately to within a year. This system establishes that "452" was made in 1758 (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2 showing latches and engraved "452".

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

Editor: PAUL ODENDAHL

All correspondence, manuscripts and applications for membership should be sent to Doug Cowan, 11 Diplomat Drive, Cincinnati OH 45215, USA. e-mail: ddclock@juno.com

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 \$6; Canada \$5 overseas \$8 — in US funds or equivalent.

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The most productive period in the clock workshop of the Jonas Barbers—the Golden Years—was 1740 to 1757/58. During this period the Barbers and John Philipson, a fully trained clockmaker employee, plus apprentices all had in total an average output of 43 clocks per year. These clocks were mostly standard 30-hour movements but 12 of the most sophisticated of the 8-day clocks were created during this time. Most 30-hour clocks were made with an 11 inch square brass dial. The 8-day clocks had break-arch dials with a lunar or tidal mechanism and a seconds hand.

Jonas Barber Sr. was the creative genius in the workshop and established the innovative ideas incorporated in the early unnumbered clocks. These ideas became the standard practice in the Barber workshop until the end of the 18th century. Jonas Sr. was an artist in metal. He engraved the metal parts on many of his early clocks for the pure joy of working with metal. It did not necessarily make the clock run any better.

Clocks made between 1708-1740 were the work of Jonas Barber Sr. From 1740 until 1748/49 (when the numbering sequence started) Jonas Barber Sr. was in charge but John Philipson and Jonas Barber Jr. (now fully trained as a clockmaker) were contributing in the shop. In addition, several apprentices also contributed to the clock output. Production continued in this way until about 1758 when the health of Jonas Barber Sr. began to fail.

During the period from 1748/49 until 1802 nearly 1450 clocks were made.

Jonas Barber Sr. made approximately 550 clocks from 1710 to 1748/49 for a total production during the 18th century of 2000 clocks.

I, "452", am a product of these "Golden Years". I am pleased that I knew the Barbers and was crafted by them in their workshop at Bryan Houses.

Now let me tell you the most important identifying marks of a 30-hour brass dial Barber clock (Fig. 3). In the years prior to 1748/49 the dial would have been engraved with the name Jonas Barber at the bottom of the chapter ring on either side of the inverted VI. After about 1749 a composite signature was employed and in its final form it has JB as a monogram. The signature now becomes JBarber Winster. It is easy to miss the J in the JB if one is not aware of it. The signature is now positioned on the chapter ring on each side of the inverted VI.

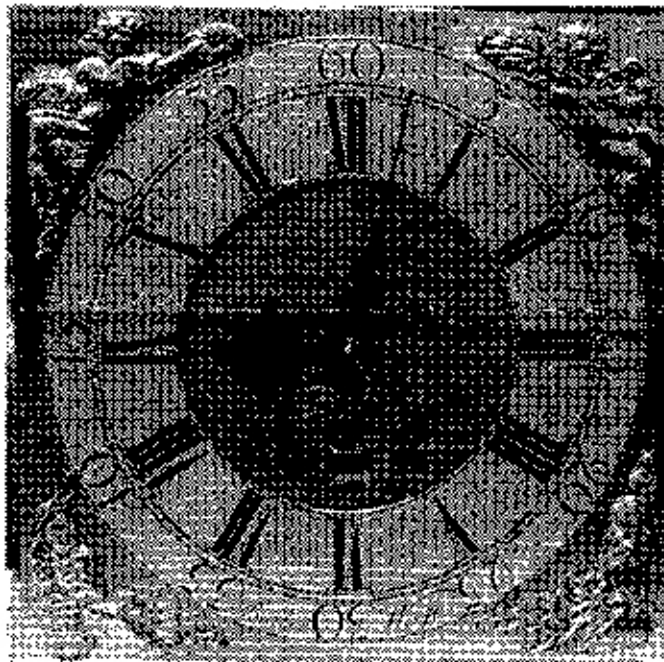


Fig. 3. Restored dial showing composite signature, spandrels, unusual 5 minute numeral, acanthus leaves, etc.

From 1725 to about 1765 a square date aperture is normal. After that date a semi-circular aperture is used until the introduction of the white dial in 1770. The center of the dial is matted. Acanthus leaves flow from under the chapter ring and around the square date aperture. The brass spandrels on the four corners are fastened with square-headed flat-topped, unslotted steel bolts. The minute Arabic 5 will have an elongation like a pig's tail. The brass dial is undercut. There are 3 dial feet, 2 of which are at the top and 1 is at the bottom. Half hour markers, minute indicators, one or two hands and style of hands will all vary as to when the clock was made.

Next, I suggest you remove the dial and examine the movement. You will find the plates are fastened with two latches, one each on the bottom left and top right

pillars (Fig. 2). The other two pillars are pinned. There is a count wheel on the rear plate driven by a 4-leaf pinion. This is a design clearly introduced by Jonas Barber Sr. which was continued until 1802. It is a design probably unique to Barber movements. After 1749 most clocks, but not all, had a number engraved on the front plate and also, often a year date. The pallets may be undercut or curved. The hammer spring is usually vertical but curved at the base. If the bell is original it will be medium deep. All 30-hour

movements are chain driven with 26 links to the foot, 12 feet long and 5 mm wide. This is considered to be an unusual size of chain. The weight is of lead, if original, and so is the counterpoise. The pendulum bob is small, bulbous and often brass-faced. There are many other features but those listed above should be sufficient to identify a dial and movement as genuine Barber.

When I left the clockshop of Jonas Barber in 1758, where did I go? I really don't know. You see at my age my memory is not what it used to be — you seniors will know what I mean.

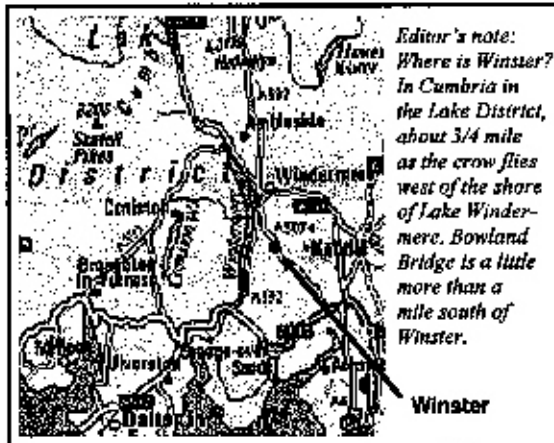
In the 18th century roads were not much better than mud tracks and I doubt if I traveled very far. Villages in the Winster valley were self-contained, that is they had all the essential trades: weaver, tailor, blacksmith, butcher, etc. plus perhaps a clockmaker. These trades people and local farmers were the clients who bought 30 hour longcase clocks from the Barbers, the wealthier merchants or members of the gentry purchased the more elaborate 8-day longcase clocks. Therefore whoever bought me, "452", must have lived close to Winster. It was a very small village having only 80 inhabitants by 1800.

I know from "scribings" on my plates that I was taken to a clockshop for cleaning or repairs on three different occasions. My first visit was in November of 1833, then in November of 1853, and again in September or 1867. My last two visits were to the same clockshop. There is no evidence of further service.

Did I go to sleep like Rip Van Winkle for many years? Was I confined to a garret or attic until I was

shipped to Canada sometime in the 1960s? Who knows. I believe that wherever I was stored the living must have been good because there was little or no rust in evidence on my metal parts.

I probably came to Canada in a container of antiques and was then sold at auction. It is interesting to note that the round gold sticker of the British Antique Dealers Association was on my case and dial, which guaranteed me as a genuine antique. For the past 30-40 years I have lived at an estate in the Peterborough area of Ontario. In October 1999 I and many other antique friends from the estate were sent to be sold at auction. The auction day was an embarrassing one for me. Here I was on the stage of the auction house in front of a crowd of several hundred people, looking my worst. My case was propped up against the wall to keep me from falling. My hood was slanted at an unattractive angle and my face was all askew. However I was purchased and moved to my new home in Toronto.



Did I come over to Canada in my original case? I do not think so. This case was made for a 12 inch square dial and mine is only an 11 inch dial. However it is a simple oak case, the type the Barbers used for

many of their 30 hour movements. This case is similar to many cases from the north of England having a shaped top to the door. However it may be a little earlier than my date of 1758. I feel quite at home in this case. It certainly has nice lines. It did, however, require restoration. This included a new base, back strengthened, hood pillars re-aligned and the top moulding "squared up" to allow my hood to sit straight. New side brackets were fastened to my hood. The size of the dial opening was reduced so that my dial now fits.

My movement also received a thorough check-up. I was taken apart, cleaned and oiled. My hour hand which had been broken earlier in life and previously soldered needed to be re-soldered. Both hands were sanded free of rust and were re-blued. The cracked fly also required re-soldering. The brass dial and spandrels were cleaned and lacquered and the chapter ring was re-silvered. Finally my plate was scribed J.W.B. Toronto April 2000. Am I different from any other 30-

hour Barber clock? Well, not really. After the pattern had been set, the Barber 30-hour movements were made basically the same for the next fifty years. I have two features which set me apart from many of my brothers and sisters. After the numbering sequence commenced in 1749, the number engraved on the front plate was usually preceded by "No." or occasionally spelled out "Number". How-

ever a few clocks had neither of these and I am one. I only have "452" engraved on my front plate—just an ordinary Joe. Why? Who knows.

I am really proud of my other

feature which is the Four Seasons spandrels. These spandrels were used probably exclusively in the north of England from about 1735 to 1760, but not in the south. They were not exclusive to Barber clocks. Clockmakers in Chester, Liverpool, Preston, etc. also used them. During the early years the Barbers offered customers a choice of six spandrel designs and from 1749 a total of 12 spandrel designs were available. The "Four Seasons" design is the most common used by the Barbers. When facing the dial, the seasons are represented by Floral for Spring in the top left corner, Ceres for Summer in the top right corner, Bacchus for Autumn in the bottom right corner and Saturn for Winter in the bottom left corner. Finally the restoration is complete and I am rejuvenated. Now that I am in my new home and "452" is "tick-tocking" quietly once more, all is right with the world and I feel on top of it. In spite of my slight memory loss I am looking forward with zest to my next two hundred years. ☺

References: 1. Loomes, B., *Westmoreland Clocks and Clockmakers*; 2. Cave-Browne-Cave, B.W., *Jonas Barber, Clockmaker of Winstler*.

Jack Busch has been an NAWCC member since 1980 and served on the executive board of Chapter 33 for 12 years. He and his wife Marion live in Toronto, Canada. Jack now collects mostly English clocks but also has many European and American clocks.



NEWS, from page 1

Chapter highlights to Bulletin; Treasurer - keeps the bank account, writes a few checks each year and keeps track of membership list for the Editor. Probably our most important office is Editor, a critical non-elective job. Paul Odendahl does it superbly but would welcome whatever help you can provide. None of these positions are arduous — we are all about having relaxed fun around the subject of British Horology. You are welcome to play!

Dues. We play, but we have to pay! We're still at \$5 per year, and your renewal notice will be in this newsletter if you haven't prepaid. Please send \$10 or more for pre-paying the next year(s). We lose too many members each year because they just forget to pay a paltry \$5.

Next Meeting. In Orlando at the Regional. The meeting should be on Friday, February 16. Please check your program when you get there.

Purpose. And as always, your chapter exec. group wants to hear from you with ideas as to how we can make this club more satisfying. We've done trips to England, research on chiming hall clocks, and a lot of educational socializing—but we can always do better.

-Doug Cowan

On page 8 of this issue begins the story of

HENRY

Bear in mind—it is a story. It follows true historical events and dates. The characters are both historical and fictional. Nowhere in the story are they identified as such but the important historical names will be apparent and horologists will recognize their own kind. The line between lesser known historical figures and fictional characters has purposely been left undefined.

It was deemed permissible to let imagination color the experiences of the characters as long as it was in keeping with historical facts.

The time frame of the story is the last half of the seventeenth century and it takes place in England, Scotland and France. It is about Henry the clock keeper during the time when English clockmaking was developing into its position of major importance.

MART

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

Russell Hoffman wants an English pair case watch, silver case, 1800-1820. Must be in excellent condition. 610-736-3654 between 7-10 PM eastern.

Stuart Kelley asks if anyone has, or knows of, complete sets of Christie's and Sotheby's clock and watch auction catalogs for their London and New York salesrooms for the period 1990-2000. He is researching the London clockmaker Henry Jones to see how many clocks and watches he produced vs. Tompion, Knibb and Quare and to compare the workforces of the four makers. 703-437-1351.

H. SAMUEL OF MANCHESTER

Jerzy Ganczarczyk [Canada] presents a perfect example of how a standard inexpensive watch can be made fascinating by examining its details and its maker and providing a healthy dose of pictures.

Many collectors of English watches have encountered inexpensive and "almost collectible" late 19th century pocket watches with an inscription on the dial and on the top plate: "H. Samuel, Manchester". However such a "maker" is not noted on any list of watch and clock makers. The explanation for that is simple: H. Samuel of Manchester was not involved in making the watches. At that time they were only distributors and retailers of jewelry merchandise of various origins and quality, including watches. For a period of time, between 1882 and 1907+, they also produced watch cases marked H.S in a cameo or incused H.Samuel. Their interest in trading in watches was quite serious. In 1895 they acquired a British Patent No 14,528 for a watch balance, and much later on in the 1960s Gilbert Samuel, the contemporary Chairman of H. Samuel Ltd, was elected Master of the Clockmakers' Company of London.

History of H. Samuel of Manchester

In 1862 Harriet Samuel took over her father-in-law's watch making business in Liverpool. Her father-in-law most likely was Sylvester Samuel of Lord Street who in 1848 succeeded his watchmaker father, Lewis Samuel. The latter was an unusual watchmaker because he also made watch cases. Such an association of basically different crafts reappeared almost half a century later in the business of H. Samuel. Soon after taking over the business Harriet

Samuel relocated to Manchester where from a Market Street address she ran the mail-order business, while her son Edgar developed the retail activities. This was a typical example of a conversion sequence from a craftsman/artisan activity into a basically business venture. The first branch of H. Samuel of Manchester opened in Preston in 1890, followed by stores in Rochdale and throughout Lancashire. In 1948 H. Samuel became a Limited Company with shares quoted on the Stock Exchange. Presently the H. Samuel chain is composed of 430 jewelry stores in England and Ireland. It is now a subsidiary of Signet Group plc.

Merchandise sold by H. Samuel of Manchester

At the end of the 19th century H. Samuel advertised its merchandise in a 224 page long catalog which offered watches, clocks, chains, rings, cutlery, plates, medallions, brooches, pins, and coronation souvenirs in gold, silver and enamel. The watches offered were both of a domestic production as well as imported, mostly Swiss, products. The watches sold differed drastically in quality and price. In the last quarter of the 19th century perhaps most popular were two specific types of watches described here more closely: "Climax" which was claimed to be completely of English manufacture, and "Acme" which looked like an English watch, but was made in Switzerland. Both of these watches were key wound and key set, but the

Climax watch was set on the dial site and the Acme watch on the top plate site. The names of these watches were registered and protected.

Climax

The inspected Climax full-plate movement of size 16 had a lever escapement, going barrel and a compensated bi-metallic balance. Its top plate was fixed with screws and had a London quadrant for the balance cock index regulation. This movement was jeweled only for the balance staff. Although not marked as such, most likely it was a product of William Ehrhard's factory in Birmingham. On the basis of its number (307 575) it could be dated from the late 1870s, but presently it is housed in a replacement double bottom case hallmarked in Birmingham for 1901. The dial of the movement was inscribed "H. Samuel, Manchester" and on its cap there was an inscription "Guaranteed English Manufacture Throughout" (Figs 1 and 2). The latter was not exactly true as at least the escapement wheel was certainly of Swiss design and likely was made in Switzerland. The top plate of the movement bore the additional inscription "Patent Trip Action" and the registered trade mark for H. Samuel (Fig. 3). The trip action most likely referred to the going barrel arrangement shown in Fig. 4. In Fig. 5 there is presented an enlarged H. Samuel trademark usually struck on many products retailed by H. Samuel.

Acme

The inspected Acme watch had a $\frac{3}{4}$ plate Swiss lever escapement and a going barrel. It was jeweled to the balance staff, lever and the escapement wheel staff. It was also clearly marked "Swiss Made" on the dial, top plate and cap (figs. 6, 7 and 8). Its balance reflected the ideas of the British patent granted to H. Samuel

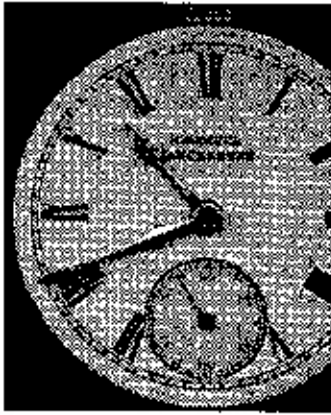


Fig. 1, Climax dial

but it was not compensated and only gave appearance of compensation to inexperienced persons. This watch was almost certainly made in Buceron Switzerland in the factory owned by H. Williamson, Ltd. The cap of the watch differed from the typical caps used for English movements but perhaps was less expensive to make.

The Acme watch was advertised at the end of the 19th century:
"The best watch in the British Isles. H. Samuel's world famous "ACME". Patent



Fig. 2, Climax cap



Fig. 3, Climax top plate



Fig. 4, Climax back site of top plate showing "trip action"



Fig. 5, Climax trade mark



Fig. 6, Acme dial



Fig. 7, Acme top plate

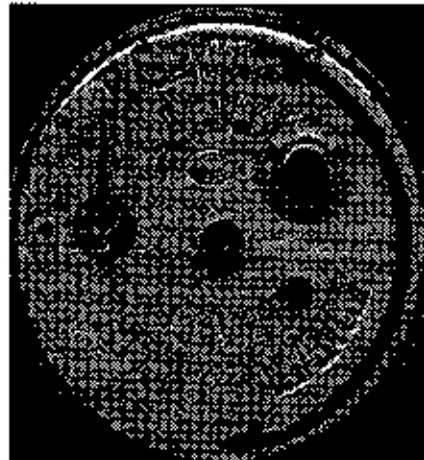


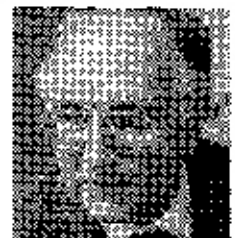
Fig. 8, Acme cap

25/4-lever. Solid silver case, fine 3/4-plate, movement, patent dust excluding cap, all H. Samuel's latest improvements, patent, not obtainable in watches of any other make. ...Warranted for seven years. Much superior to watches sold at double the price on pernicious installment scheme."

Closure

The presented watches are by no means impressive and they certainly could not successfully compete qualitywise with some excellent American products of the day. They are however characteristic examples of medium quality, inexpensive watches retailed in England in the last quarter of the 19th century. ☺

Dr. Jerzy Ganczarczyk is educated as a chemical and environmental engineer. He is a Fellow of Royal Society of Health, and Professor Emeritus of civil engineering at the University of Toronto. His collecting interests center on English 18th century pocket watches. He is a member of Chapters 33 (Toronto), 159 (British Horology) and 161 (Horological Science).



HENRY - Part 1

Paul Odendahl (LA) spins a tale of horological history, adventure and intrigue in the 17th century.

Abridged from *The First Henry*, copyright © by The Royal Archivists. Used with permission.

It was Spring of the year 1651 and Henry, age 19, had just come through a nasty, wet, muddy Scottish winter as a soldier in Oliver Cromwell's New Model Army. He found himself in the town of Peebles and realized that he was tired now of the never ending marching, wrecking and plundering.

About the only thing Henry came to like about the whole business were the clocks. Sometimes the towers contained huge pieces of machinery which, when they came crashing down, usually survived with only minor damage and distortion. The bells didn't make it, ending up in fragments. But Henry's eye, unpractised as it was about mechanical contrivances, could discern the craftsmanship and the knowledge which brought life into this intermeshing dead iron. Whenever he could he lingered at the pile of metal and studied it.



Cromwell's men sacking a village

Now Henry was ready to get back to something productive. He realized that he wanted to create, not destroy. Work, not fight. His term in the New Model was nearly over and Henry gave notice that he would not re-enlist. His sergeant was always rough and never happy, and he didn't like the news, but he took it in stride.

"Gads," Henry thought to himself, "I thought he'd knock my head about. Guess he doesn't want a soldier who spends his spare time studying clocks."

Henry could not have been more wrong. That evening, after a particularly rough preceding day of mopping up a band of stragglng Scots holed up at the Port of Leith, the sergeant sought out Henry and took him aside. He never shaved and hardly ever bathed but Henry thought he saw his eyes sparkle as he spoke.

"So ye're a quitter, are ye?"

"No sir. With respect, I'm not a quitter."

"I know, I know," said the sergeant. "I knew ye'd be leaving. Ye want to find out about those blasted clocks, I bet."

"You're right, Sarge. I want to work on clocks, I want to make clocks."

Then the sergeant got as

mellow as the grizzly old bear could get. His red hair shone in the twilight and his eyes assumed a depth that Henry had not seen before. He looked squarely at Henry and placed one hand on his shoulder.

"Do ye remember last September at Castle Dunbar? The fight?"

"Yes." Henry thought to himself: "Fight? It wasn't a fight; it was a *battle*."

"Ye were supposed to be poking into the ruins with Will and the others to find anybody hiding there?"

"Yes."

"Instead ye were poking into the wreckage of the fallen ironworks which ye said was a clock. And I came up yelling for ye to get over to Will. Just at that instant a crazy Scot with blood running down his face jumped out from the pile of iron and lunged at me screaming wildly. Ye were examining an iron rod and before the Scot could get to me ye laid him flat with the rod. I acted as though it was nothing at the time but after ye left I stooped down to examine the Scot and found an 8 inch dirk in his right hand."

After a pause the sergeant added, "Thank you. I'm in your debt."

Somehow Henry knew that someday the sergeant would repay that debt.

The sergeant continued, "Five days from now one of Cromwell's wagon trains will leave Glasgow heading south. It will be escorted by two cavalry units and ye know that means safety, comfort and good food. The train will pass through Moffat. Probably take two days, maybe

three, to get to Moffat. I have arranged for a civilian job for ye on the train. Don't know what it will be, but whatever it is, do it.

"Use the rest of this day to turn in your arms and visit the paymaster. He will have your discharge paper. Guard it. I have arranged for ye to be discharged now so ye can ride that train south. It only moves every two months. Comes up with supplies; goes back nearly empty except for some wounded. Ye must get to Moffat on your own. Be there in seven days latest. And Henry, don't come whining to me that your pay is short. Ye are leaving 2 weeks early, remember?"

—

Down at the banks of the Tweed in Peebles Henry scouted for transportation. There was little activity but he did discover a small wooden double-ended boat, not much more than a scow which seemed to be making ready. Henry approached the friendly face of a big muscular man busying himself at the tiller.

"Going south?" asked Henry.
The man looked up but didn't

say a word.

"I'm going to Moffat."

The man studied Henry's build.

"I don't have money but I can work my way."

"Not going to Moffat," said the man.

"But you are going south?" The boat's bow was pointed upstream.

The man straightened up and looked hard at Henry again.

"You in the English army?"

"Just separated."

"What's your name?"

"Henry."

"Listen up, Henry. I'm a Scot but I admire the valor of the English. It happens that I am alone and want to leave here. Did you ever pole a boat?"

"Sure," lied Henry. About the only thing Henry had "poled" were fortress walls being scaled.

The man got up, stepped out of the boat and approached Henry on the bank. He took a good unabashed look at Henry's trunk and arms.

"I am going south. It's against the current. It's polling all the way

and it gets harder as we go. I'm going as far as Dykehead. Then there are 14 more miles to Moffat, and you'll have to walk through hills. No pay, no food; just work and sleep. Eat whatever you can find. I'll take a chance with you but if there's laziness or mischief I'll toss you overboard."

"When will we get to Dykehead?"

"Day after tomorrow."

Henry calculated. Two days on the boat. Probably three days walking. He had six days remaining to get to Moffat.

"You're on," said Henry.

"Stay here 'till I call." The man wheeled about and Henry could not quite tell if he slipped on the wet bank or if he purposely frisked Henry, but his hands did flicker across Henry's clothing.

Presently the man was ready. "Cast off aft!"

Henry obeyed.

"Cast off forrard and hop aboard!"

Henry did and grabbed the second pole. The boat swung out into the current and they were off.

It didn't take Henry long to fall into the rhythm set by the man. With Henry at the bow and the man at the stern controlling the tiller between his knees they developed teamwork, changing the poles from side to side as needed. At sundown they came to a sandy shoal on the right bank of the Tweed just south of Lyme. The man signalled Henry and they slid onto the sand. Pulling the boat completely free of the water for the night Henry noticed that it seemed quite heavy, yet the only cargo was a dozen or so flat packages wrapped in oiled skins laying in the bilge.

The man produced a bag of



The bridge over the river Tweed at Peebles with the beach in the foreground where Henry negotiated his transportation.

nuts and a slab of cheese which he shared with Henry in spite of his previous warning about no food. This was their first opportunity to converse.

"What are those packages in the bilge?" asked Henry.

"Knives," the man answered. "Shearing knives. I get them from your country. Sheffield. I sell them in the sheep country."

They spent the remaining time before going to sleep talking about iron and steel. It turned out that the man's father owned a forge and since childhood the man had worked there. The man was generous in explaining to Henry the various techniques of heating and shaping iron, of making steel and of hardening and tempering it. Henry was all ears. He kept thinking of those clocks.

After two more days they arrived in Dykehead and Henry was ready to begin his 14 mile walk to Moffat. First he thanked the man and then started for a few yards on his way when he heard a hail from the boat.

"Catch!" said the man, and lobbed something in a clean arc to Henry. Henry caught it with one hand. It was a lovely 9 inch dagger housed in a tooled sheath. Upon examining the dagger Henry saw the mark "Sheffield".

"You might need it," said the man. "Farewell!"

"Thank you. Farewell!" and Henry turned and resumed his walk.

The man stood stationary in the boat for a long five minutes and watched until Henry disappeared around a clump of trees.



It was no trouble for Henry to get to Moffat. He set a leisurely pace for himself and made it in two days, arriving in Moffat just after noon.

Five days gone; the wagon train due tomorrow. Seated under a tree and resting his back against its trunk, Henry began to wonder what the future would hold for him. He didn't wonder long. He heard a low thundering sound coming from the north and noticed a dust cloud in the sky. Could it be...? A day early?

As the sound and dust came closer Henry could make out a cluster of horsemen. Then he saw that they wore buff coats of thick leather with armored covering. Cavalry. Behind came wagons, one after another, and more cavalry at the rear. This was it! This was the wagon train he was to join. Henry learned a lesson that day: Be early when you can. You might be rewarded.

Henry found the cavalry officer, gave his name and was told to get into the first wagon and tend to an injured officer that lay in it. The train didn't stay long. Horses watered, they started back on the road which stretched to London.

Henry did the best he could with the injured man who had caught a round in his left thigh. The ball had gone right through. Henry found water, cloth for dressing and food in the wagon. There was nobody or nothing else in the wagon. It was obvious that the officer was quite uncomfortable because of the rough road and the lurching of the wagon. As soon as the train stopped again Henry went in search of something to pad the bare floor on which

the officer was lying. Lo and behold, in the third wagon back he found bedding, probably for the cavalry when the train camped. Henry stole enough to make the officer comfortable. As they rode, Henry fed the officer, who wouldn't take much and kept him cool with a cloth dipped in water, for he had developed a fever.

That evening they reached the border. There was an English brigade stationed there on the English side. They searched all the wagons and questioned all the men. Henry had to take off his boot and produce his discharge paper.

Just then a cavalryman galloped up to Henry's wagon and said,

"Now that we are in England, we are going to stop at Carlisle and transport Major Buffington to a hospital there. I am using my rank to commission you in the field to accompany the Major, to stay with him for as long as he wants you, to see that he gets proper care, and to report to me anything, anything at all, that is out of order with the care that the Major gets. I have prepared a warrant which authorizes you to do this and to use any means available to get a message to me and which tells where I expect to be stationed in London. You will be a civilian with a military classification. Your pay will be that of an orderly." With that the officer wheeled his



The hospital at Carlisle

horse around and galloped away. Henry's left boot came off and the warrant went in.

The hospital at Carlisle was luxurious compared to anything Henry had visited in the past year. He was given a bunk in the Major's private room and three square meals a day. The major improved and soon could hold a conversation: "What's your name, boy, and what are you doing here?"

"Sir, I'm commissioned to stay at your side as long as you want me."

"Besides your word, how do I know that?"

"Sir, I have a warrant."

"Let's see it." The Major was wary.

Off came the left boot.

"Umm-m, seems to be in order. How is my horse?"

"Gads," thought Henry, "what horse?" Instead he said, "Very well, sir."

As soon as the Major dozed off for his nap, Henry scrambled. Back of the hospital he found a small field and Major Buffington's horse. He came each day from then on to check and care for the horse.

One day Major Buffington asked Henry:

"Have you ever been to Bedfordshire?"

"Only passing through."

"I was born and grew up in Bedford," said the Major. "There may be some clock activity there."

Henry's ears pricked up.

The Major continued: "There was a blacksmith in Ickwell Green, about 6 miles from Bedford, who made a clock or two. He made some forgings for me before I joined the

army. He must be getting along in years now."

"Do you remember his name?"

"No-oo, I don't. I remember that he had three children: two boys and a girl and one of the boys was a junior and... Tompion! That's it. Thomas Tompion, the father and Thomas Tompion, the son. I now remember that the son was always at the forge, getting in his father's way, using up the materials and asking a lot of questions. I believe they moved away from Ickwell Green but I am not sure. The father was a wonderful craftsman who could make anything of iron and as I recall the son was mostly interested in clocks. About your age, too."

Henry listened and heard.

Two months later Major Buffington, who was now sitting up and walking a bit got a serious look on his face after Henry had given him the daily report about his horse. "Can you ride?"

"Certainly," answered Henry.

"I want you to do something for me. I am being discharged from the hospital next week. I cannot ride in the saddle yet, so the army will carry me south in one of the bi-monthly wagon trains. I want you to ride Nellie south to Bedford for me. I cannot leave her here and I will not have her trailing behind a wagon. Take her to my mother's home in Bedford and live there until I come home. Care for Nellie as you have done here. I have dispatched a letter to my mother telling her of this plan. When you start out, which will be the day that I board the wagon train, I will give you 6 shillings for food and lodging for you and Nellie. I cannot order you to do this but I hope that you will."

Henry was as delighted as he was surprised. "Certainly I will do that, sir. You can count on it."

The Major's house in Bedford was a house indeed. It was a manor. Henry arrived on a September day in 1651, dusty and tired, but happy. Nellie was in good condition, having enjoyed the journey much more than grazing in that confined Carlisle field.

The Major's mother, Mrs Buffington, was the most beautiful and gracious lady that Henry had ever seen.

"Welcome to Bedford House, Henry. How was my son John when you left him?"

After the polite preliminaries, Mrs Buffington got right down to business. She told him that her groundskeeper had put Nellie in the stable and that Henry had access to her anytime he wanted. She showed Henry the most comfortable, cleanest bedroom that Henry had ever seen and told him that was his



Mrs Buffington, the Major's mother

room. She introduced him to the two butlers, the three maids, the three cooks and the housekeeper. Then she wanted to know where Henry's belongings were. Henry didn't dare take off his boots so he told her that he didn't have any belongings.

"No belongings!" exclaimed Mrs Buffington. "Well, we shall see to that!"

Henry spent the rest of the day visiting Nellie, exploring the grounds and examining his room. After the evening meal he retired early and slept the sleep of the innocent. Next morning he was up at his usual early hour and found that his clothes were not where he had left them but were neatly folded and laid upon a bench near the bed and they were *clean*. His boots were also cleaned and polished and were alongside the bench.

After breakfast Mrs Buffington beckoned Henry to a table in the library. There, to his astonishment, lay his army discharge, his warrant from the cavalry officer at Carlisle, and 4 pence left over from his ride from Carlisle.

"Boots are no good double for a safe," said she. The papers did look a bit stained. "I shall place these in our iron chest until you want them."

Major Buffington arrived home in due course and on the last day of October of 1651 the Major broached a subject.

"Bedford House," he began, "is too big for my mother and me. Our loyal staff is very efficient but ill-used. My father died five years ago and I have neither wife nor children, although that might change. We think that you would make a good addition to Bedford House. I am almost old enough to be your father. Would you consider staying on with us and letting us treat you as if you were part of the family?"

Henry thought: That sounds like a good life but what would I be *doing*? I feel as if I must *do* something, not just exist. He also thought: and the clocks — what about the clocks?

As if he read Henry's mind, Major Buffington continued, "Tomorrow, Henry, I want to take you over to Ickwell Green. I have found out that the Tompions have not moved. I think you would want to make their acquaintance."

"Major Buffington, your offer about the family is most generous. It is an important decision for me to make. May I think on it for a day or two?" As to your second offer, I would be delighted to go to Ickwell Green with you. You are most kind."

"Granted on both counts," said the Major.



Bright and early the next morning Major Buffington and Henry were on their way. Their destination was Ickwell Green, just south of Northill. It was just about 6 miles and Nellie made quick work of getting the carriage there.

Eleven year old Margaret was in the yard gathering flowers when they drove up.

"Good morning, Margaret, we have come to call. Is your mother inside?"

"Oh yes, Major Buffington. I'll go fetch her."

Mrs. Tompion came out of the front door smoothing her apron and showing her characteristic hearty smile.

"Major Buffington! How good to see you! Good morning and how is your leg?"

"Almost mended," replied the Major as he swung down from the carriage. "See?"

"Do come in and have a refreshment." Mrs Tompion was already shepherding them toward the door.

Inside, Major Buffington introduced Henry to the two Margarets: mother and daughter, and asked about Mr Tompion. The refreshment was buttered ale made by warming the ale, sweetening it with sugar, and spicing it with cinnamon. (Despite its name it contained no butter.) ☺

(To be continued)

Paul Odendahl thinks history can be fanciful, sometimes strange, and when combined with horology, enchanting.



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