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Paul Odendahl
Editor & Publisher

British Horology Times

NAWCC CHAPTER 159

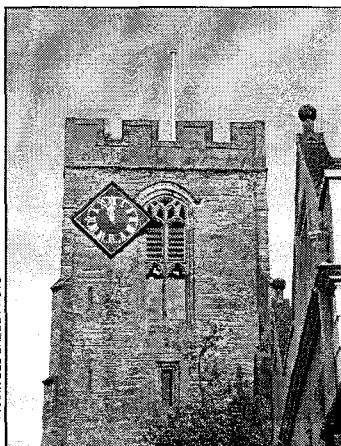
News FROM CHAPTER 159

At our meeting in Fort Mitchell, Ken Johnston gave a very interesting presentation on the makers of Coventry watches from the Chaplefields district, concentrating on what remains of their production facilities. Most are falling into ruin and it won't be long until they have disappeared forever. At the National in Cleveland this month Tom Spittler will talk to the chapter about the manufacture of 19th century longcase clock movements. I suspect that Tom will concentrate on the wide range of kits and partially finished parts that were available to the clockmaker who only had to do the finishing work on parts and assemble to have a movement ready for a dial and a case.

Our plans for the chapter's Mart table at the National are moving right along. We can still use volunteers to man the table during Mart hours. The Mart will be open from 9AM until 5PM on Thursday, June 22, from 9AM

to 5PM on Friday, June 23, and from 9AM to 3PM on Saturday, June 24. The main purpose for having the table is to make the general NAWCC membership more aware of Chapter 159 and the things that it does. By doing so we may get more members interested in joining. We plan to have photos from our three trips to England along with copies of British Horology Times, membership applications and information about the Chapter meeting during the National.

We now have twenty five people signed up for the Chapter 159 sponsored tour of England that starts in London on March 16, 2007 and ends on March 30, 2007. Phil Priestley is still making some minor changes but the schedule is mostly firm. We should have access to a number of museum areas and conservation rooms not open to the public.



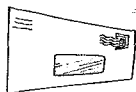
FRANK DEL GRECO PHOTO

St. John's Baptist Church in Henley-in-Arden

-Roger Gendron



"Notice Neptune, though, taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity, which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me." To put it another way: "Notice the envelope which this newsletter came in, all neat and with your name printed on it, which Dave of Manhasset made for you".



Dave Kern not only printed the envelope, he bought and affixed the stamp. "So what?" you ask.

So he does that for you and for more than 100 other members of Chapter 159. "Oh," you add, "nice job."

Not only that. Dave keeps a list of members which

shows mailing and email addresses, when your dues were paid and how much you paid (some members pay several years in advance), when your membership will expire, your NAWCC number, your phone number, and more.

So publishing our newsletter is truly a cooperative venture. But there's more.

An important part of this venture is carried out by you folks who contribute the articles that appear in the newsletter. Without you we wouldn't have a newsletter. Sharing tips, interesting experiences, technical information, offering to buy or sell in our free newsletter Mart, all make other members eager to open and read the newsletter. You are the glue that holds us together.

Please keep up the good work.

-Paul Odendahl

SECOND LINE



THE AUCTIONEER IS NOT YOUR FRIEND !

By Doug Cowan (OH)

As collectors we often think of auctions as a friendly place to add to our collections. And there is no doubt that they serve a role in redistributing horological treasures throughout the world. But I am reminded that they do not represent the buying collector. And sometimes they just barely represent the seller! Several examples follow:

- I just received a \$54 check from Sotheby's to settle a lawsuit involving illegal price fixing between themselves and Christie's.
- I have been affronted by outright misrepresentation by Sotheby's experts during pre-auction showings in New York. (I believe that this is much less prevalent in London.)
- I have personally heard so-called Client Advisors tell a neophyte: "If you like something just hold up your bidding paddle and don't take it down until you win".

And now I've read a book entitled *Sotheby's Bidding for Class* by Robert Lacey (Little, Brown & Co., 1998).

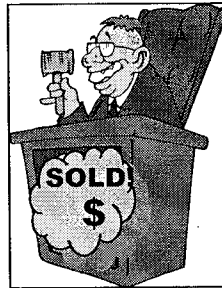
Here are a few points quoted from this book:

- "The successful art auction house presents itself as a temple of civilized style and judgment, but its essential function is to uncivilize the judgment of at least two normally balanced people and entice them to bid for an object as far as possible above the price it would command in a shop. The appeal is to cupidity and recklessness."
- "Both Sotheby's and Christie's regularly accepted consignments from dealers who had cleansed the

pedigrees of illegally excavated antiquities."

- "Sotheby's had a good name - but a company that manufactured bids and non-existent buyers, turned a blind eye to smuggled goods, and routinely connived in tax evasion had an uncertain claim on virtue."

One CEO of Sotheby's during the 20th century was repeatedly observed extracting possibly as much as \$750,000 in left bids over the telephone, from a drunken or drugged Hollywood actress.



The book details the origins of Sotheby's as a seller of used books (Samuel Baker 1713-1778). Baker evolved into auctioning books by 1744 but it was much later when the firm branched out into fine art sales. At first Christie's got the fine art and sent Sotheby's book collections to sell.

But the two firms became bitter enemies and two hundred years went by wherein the main thrust became to beat each other for each year's highest sales turnover - often without much regard to whether these sales were profitable - or morally respectable. There are heroes and rascals outlined in the book, an altogether fascinating parade. The book has been remaindered so should not be expensive to obtain.

The moral? Keep your common sense sharp when you approach these people.

(More about auctions on P. 8)

Doug continues to delight with facts and knowledgeable tips.



NEXT MEETING

At the Cleveland, Ohio NAWCC National, Friday, June 23, 9AM. Room 203 Convention Ctr, Tom Spittler will speak on the manufacture of 19th century longcase clock movements.



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SAMUEL JONES - CARTEL CLOCKMAKER OF BATH

One surprise leads to another when Dennis Radage (Canada) finds a cartel clock and goes to work researching and discovering facts and more similar clocks.

It would not be unusual for someone passionate about English clocks to buy a good looking cartel clock made toward the end of the 18th century, particularly if the clock was in a really good condition. I prefer to buy at auctions, or privately, but there are exceptions and this was one of those occasions.

A few years ago we made a "now not so frequent pilgrimage" to visit family and friends, to peruse antique clock shops, and to take in all the antique shows possible. That's how I met this exception. A cartel clock was on display at an annual Olympia Antiques Show in London.

I obviously showed great interest in the clock since within a tick of

the verge and crownwheel escapement, the seller appeared from nowhere. Our discussion, of course, focused on the clock's merits, its features and the condition. The clock was very decorative, even somewhat flamboyant, the latter apparently being one of the key reasons why these clocks (the style) never held popularity very long at all. Like all potential buyers mentally justifying the cost, the clock's condition elevated from good to excellent. This was a dangerous time, particularly with my wife just a few stalls away.

The clock, **Figure 1**, was typical of a late 18th century English cartel with a 9" circular all over silvered dial. It had Roman chapters

and Arabic minutes outside of the minute band. It had a false pendulum and nicely pierced contemporary blued steel non-matching hands. The dial was signed Sam Jones, Bath across its center. As is usual, it was a time only movement with spring barrel and fusee and nicely shaped brass plates. The short bob pendulum was secured by a small pendulum holdfast. The movement was held into the case by a forged iron crossbar swaged out at the ends, drilled and screwed into the case. The pierced giltwood case was in the form of acanthus leaf "C" scrolls, flowers and a Ho-Ho bird to the side. The case measured approximately 34" high and 25" wide.

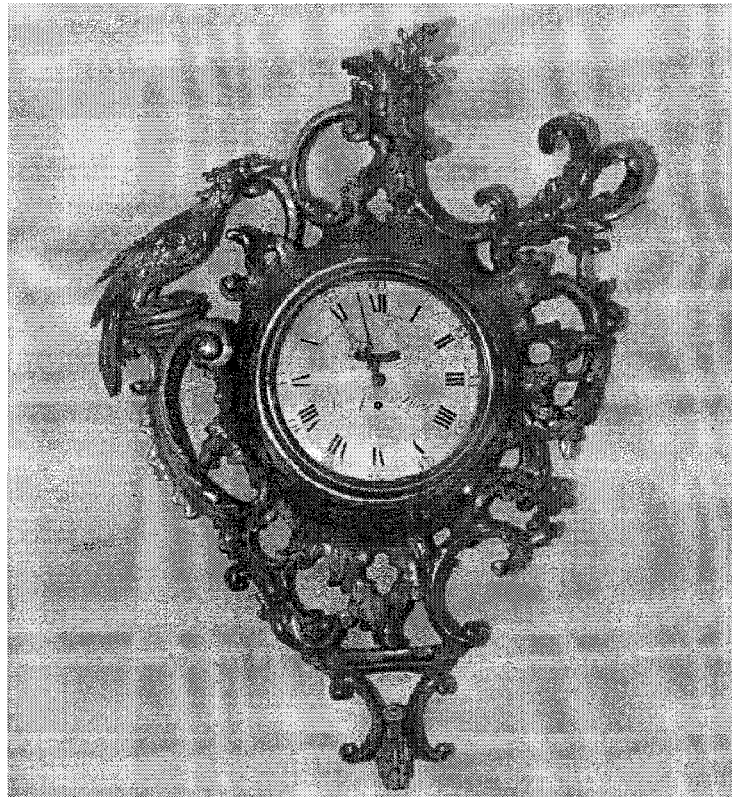


Figure 1. Dennis Radage's Sam Jones Cartel Clock.

I did not buy the clock (at that time). However, I did ask for the seller's card so that "if" I was able to justify the purchase, I had contact details. I guess that the seller went from the anxiety of anticipation of a sale to the depths of disappointment. I did call back on the last day of the show just to see if the clock had sold, and it had not. About a week later I rang the dealer and started negotiating. He was as eager as I was to come to an arrangement, and likely recover some of the costs of the show. I finally did buy the clock, so I put us both out of our misery. The price was substantially better than what was advertised at the show.

Despite its size, I collected the

clock and suitably packed it for transport home. There was a little hassle at the airport check-in and security, but we managed to overcome that.

Essentially no restoration was required; the movement, the case and gilding were in fine condition. I did a little research and found some interesting details in the books by Britten, Baillie and Loomes, which I carefully noted in my inventory documents. However, other than being a very nice clock that added well to my collection of English clocks, nothing more was considered.

It must have been a year or so later when I ordered the book *Watch and Clock Makers in the City of Bath*

by Ian White. I was very surprised and delighted to find that the illustration on the front cover, and the foreword, was indeed my cartel clock by Sam Jones. This caused me to investigate further. However, the foreword listed the clock as being one that was currently owned by the Bath Preservation Trust and was on display at No. 1 Royal Crescent in Bath. Could Sam Jones have made two identical clocks? Maybe.

It was about another year before we made our next visit to England and naturally No. 1 Royal Crescent was on the itinerary. When we did make it there, we found that no photography was allowed, and worse, there was nobody around who

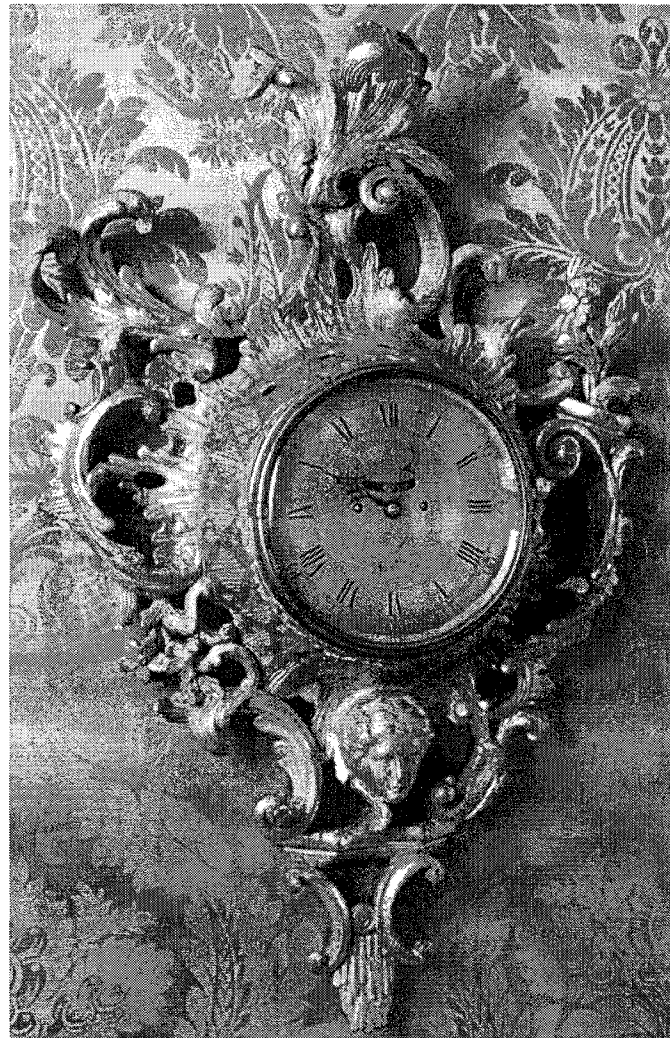


Figure 2, Sam Jones clock, Bath Preservation Trust.

was knowledgeable regarding the pieces in this museum. A Sam Jones giltwood cartel clock did grace the living room wall, one quite similar to mine but unmistakably different, **Figure 2**. The Ian White book actually illustrated my clock, and not the one at No. 1 Royal Crescent, so two very similar clocks were made by Sam Jones. This was very nice and adds interest and a connection to my clock. The museum clock has a very similar silvered dial with false pendulum, but has two winding arbors. It is a striking cartel clock. The giltwood case, although quite similar, is missing the Ho-Ho bird. In its place is a simple spray of

leaves and flowers. This find naturally created a dialogue between myself, Ian White and the Bath Preservation Trust.

Some time later, while researching a Dutch clock for a friend, I had reason to view the book *European Pendulum Clocks* by Peter Hewer and Klaus Maurice (this is the English version of an earlier published German book). I was again surprised to find, on page 157, yet another giltwood cartel clock by Sam Jones, **Figure 3**. In fact the similarities with the other two clocks was remarkable. This third clock was quite similar to the museum clock: time and

strike, false pendulum, signed Sam Jones, Bath. But this third clock had a vacant space to the 3 o'clock side where a spray of flowers was missing, and there were other small but distinct differences to the case. The description read "*Cartel clock signed 'Sam(ue)l Jones, Bath', circa 1770. Eight day movement, striking on a bell, crown wheel escapement with rear pendulum and center-pendulum. Convex silvered metal dial with Roman numbers. Gilded wooden case made by Thomas Chippendale, circa 1718-1779*". This third clock was later found to be hanging in the Court Room of the Worshipful Company of Haberdashers in London.

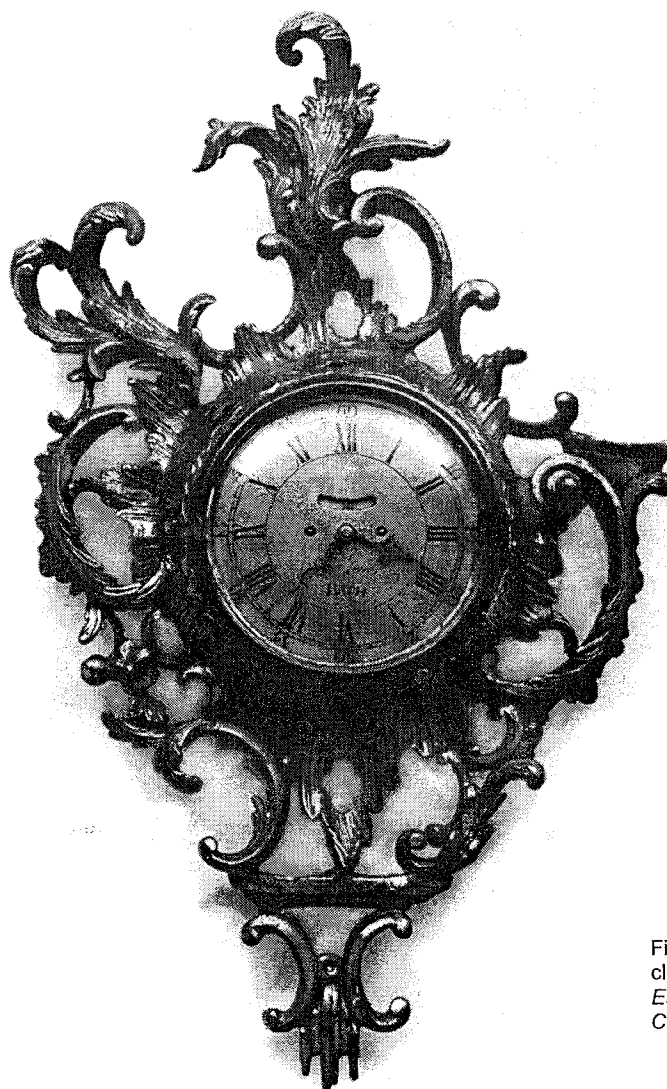


Figure 3, Sam Jones clock from the book *European Pendulum Clocks*.

Chippendale and Jones were indeed contemporaries and certainly would have been in Bath at the same time. A review of *The Chippendale Director* arranged by J. Munro Bell illustrates a design on page 17, **Figure 4**, from which these clocks could easily have been created. This research obviously continues.

This was to be the story, but then some stories never end. I received my Christie's South Kensington Auction Catalog for the sale on Thursday 16th December 2004. You guessed it - on page 61, Lot #273, there was yet another similar cartel clock by Sam Jones. This one was very similar to that of Figure 3, also with the spray of flowers missing. There were sufficient differences to realize that this was not the third clock illustrated in the German book, but a fourth cartel clock, **Figure 5**.

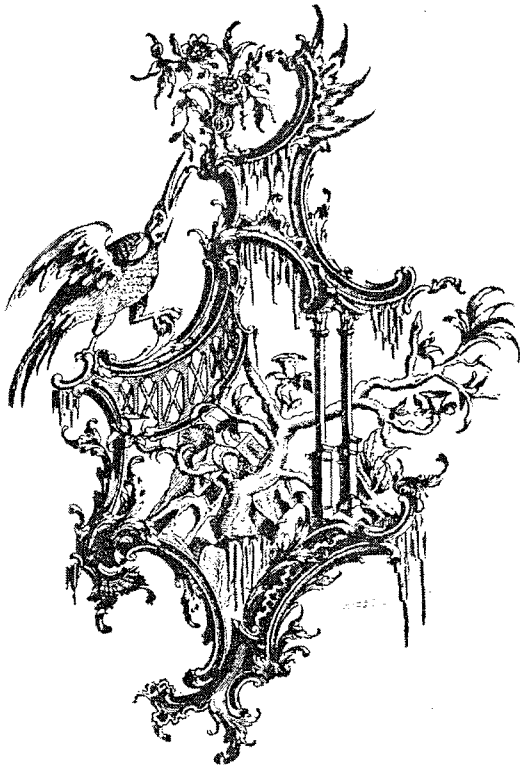


Figure 4, Chippendale design.

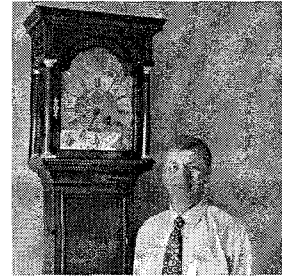
Sam Jones has obviously made at least four similar clocks. Is there a Chippendale connection? Who knows, but it is certainly something to research and wish for. A member of the Antiquarian Horological Society in the UK is assisting me with the research. However if you have ideas, I would love to hear from you.

The city of Bath has a very prominent position in the history of the English wealthy, particularly during the late 17th and early 18th centuries when trips were made to the Roman baths there. Tompion and other prominent makers were there and Tompion has a clock in the Bath pump house.

Literature on cartel clocks is quite scarce. The book *English Dial Clocks* by Ron E. Rose informs that "the English cartel clock evolved into the very popular and much less decadent English dial clock. The cartel clock first appeared in the

houses of the wealthy about 1730 and disappeared about 1780. The flamboyant features just did not catch on in England, so English cartel clocks were not made in large numbers."

To be continued



Dennis Radage is a respected authority on English clocks and a welcome repeat-contributor to BHT. He may be reached at <clocks@telus.net>

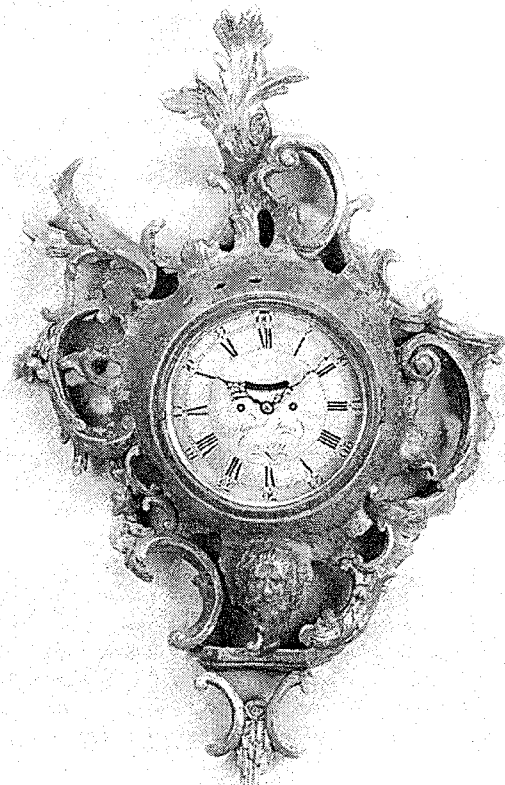


Figure 5, Sam Jones clock, Christie's

FIGURES 1 THROUGH 3 ARE REPEATED BELOW FOR EASY COMPARISON OF THE DETAILS

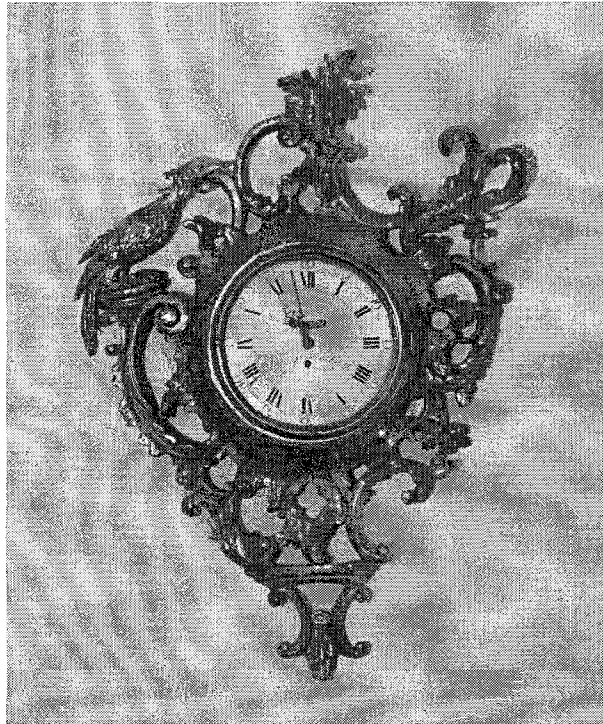


Figure 1, Dennis Radage's Sam Jones cartel clock.

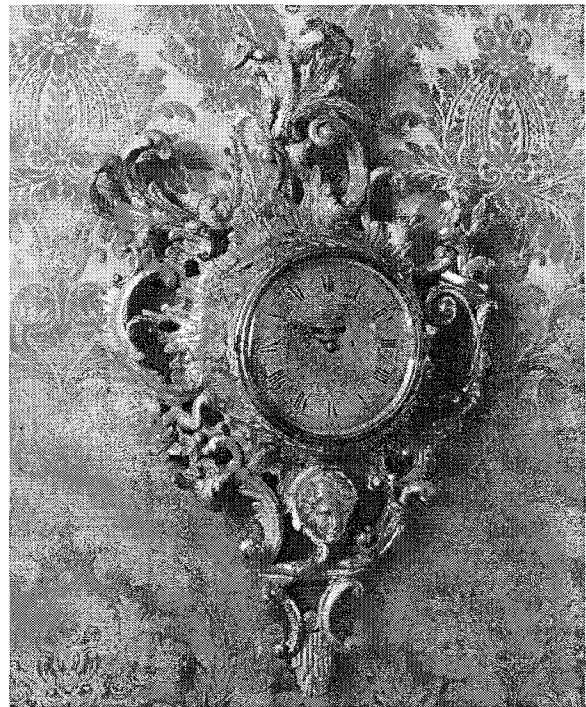


Figure 2, Sam Jones clock, Bath Preservation Trust

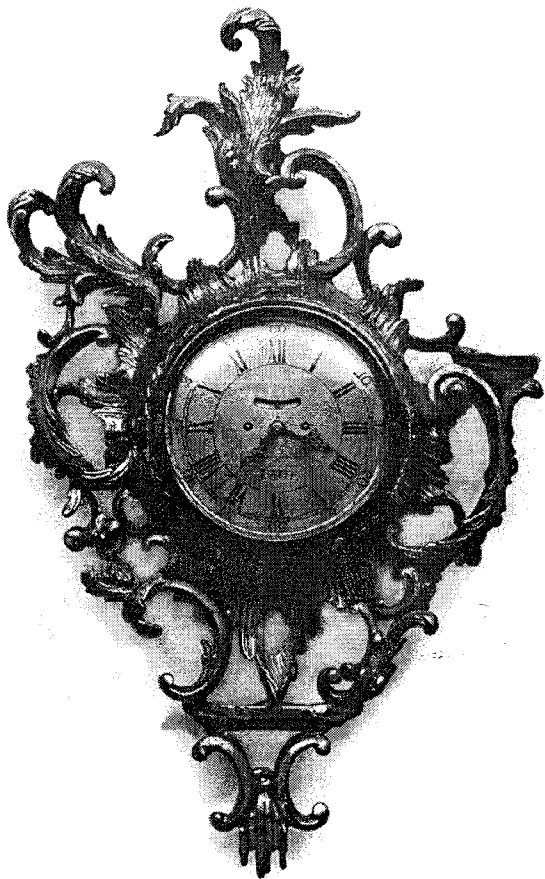


Figure 3, Sam Jones clock, *European Pendulum Clocks*.

Not knowing what a Ho-Ho bird was, the Editor did a little research and here is some of what he found.

From *The English Oxford Dictionary*, second edition, volume VII, p. 292: *A mythical bird of pheasant-like appearance used frequently as an emblem of courage.*

From the Internet: The fung-hwang, or phoenix or ho-ho bird was pre-eminent for elegance and benevolence and seems to have been a kind of pheasant, or a bird of paradise. It would neither injure living insects or growing herbs, but lived in the highest regions of the air and only descended to earth as the harbinger of good tidings - happy events to individuals, prosperous reigns to emperors.



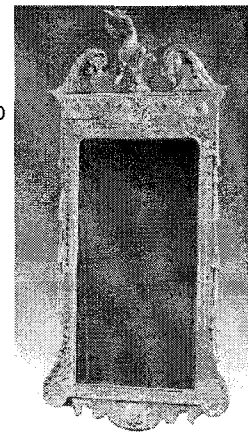
Contemporary carving of a Ho-Ho bird by Nick Hunter, woodcarver of Sheffield, England.

Another: Ho-Ho birds were a symbol of good fortune, signifying longevity, fidelity and wisdom. In the Georgian period carved Ho-Ho birds started to appear on furniture, particularly mirrors.

In Asia it was variously spelled: fung-hwang, fwang-hwang, or fung-huang.



Mirror cresting



Mirror, ca 1730

Scam hatched in secret meetings, Sotheby's CEO says.

Deals in violation of anti-trust laws

Press release by The Associated Press, November 20, 2001

NEW YORK - The disgraced chief executive of Sotheby's auction house testified Monday that a scheme with Christie's to rip off their well-heeled clientele was hatched during secret meetings in 1993.

Diana Brooks told a jury that Sotheby's chairman A. Alfred Taubman and his counterpart at Christie's, Anthony Tennant, agreed behind closed doors that they "were killing each other on the bottom line and that it was time to do something about it".

Taubman, 76, of Bloomfield Hills, Mich., is on trial in Manhattan federal court on charges that he and Tennant stole as much as \$400 million in commissions from sellers from 1993 to 1999. Tennant, 71, of Andover, England remains a fugitive.

Brooks claimed Taubman ordered her to meet with Christie's chief executive, Christopher Davidge, and end the costly rivalry by eliminating discounts and by fixing commissions—a violation of anti-trust laws. He also warned her

to keep quiet about it, she added.

"I said, 'Fine, I wouldn't tell anyone,'" Brooks said.

Brooks—the first woman to head a major auction house and one of the most powerful figures in the art world in the past decade—

*Taubman is
on trial in
federal
court.
Tennant
remains a
fugitive.*

pleaded guilty in October 2000 to price-fixing charges. Hoping to avoid a three-year prison sentence, she also agreed to testify against Taubman.

Brooks testified that she and Davidge came up with a plan to charge sellers identical, non-negotiable fees and take other measures to cut costs and boost

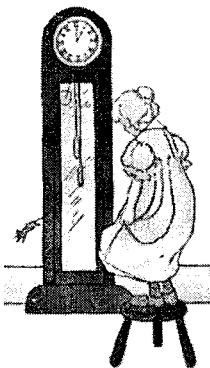
revenue. Davidge offered similar testimony last week, saying he was under orders from Tennant to covertly ease competition between the venerable auction houses, which together control more than 90 percent of the world's art auctions.

On cross-examination, Brooks admitted initially lying to lawyers about the conspiracy. But she denied accusations by Taubman's attorney, Robert Fiske, that she considered the investigation "absurd" and a "waste of time".

Fiske has alleged that Davidge and Brooks cut a price-fixing deal without telling Taubman.

If convicted, Taubman would face up to three years in prison.

Sotheby's has pleaded guilty to price-fixing charges and was sentenced to pay \$45 million. Christie's was granted amnesty by the government for its cooperation, which included Davidge's testimony.



Hickory, Dickory, Dock,
The mouse ran up the clock.
The clock struck one,
The mouse ran down.
Hickory, Dickory, Dock.

HICKORY, DICKORY, DOCK

Hickory, Dickory, Dock is a Mother Goose nursery rhyme, probably originating in America. Hickory is derived from the Indian word "Pawcohiccora", a kind of oily liquor pressed from pounded hickory nuts, and Dock is a species of plant.

This limerick is a classic example of onomatopoeia, a word that imitates sound - like boom, bong, clap and tick-tock. "Hickory, Dickory, Dock" sounds like an old longcase clock with hiccups. The first publication date of the rhyme is 1744. It was intended to introduce children to the fundamentals of telling the time.

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