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March 2007



Paul Odendahl
Editor & Publisher

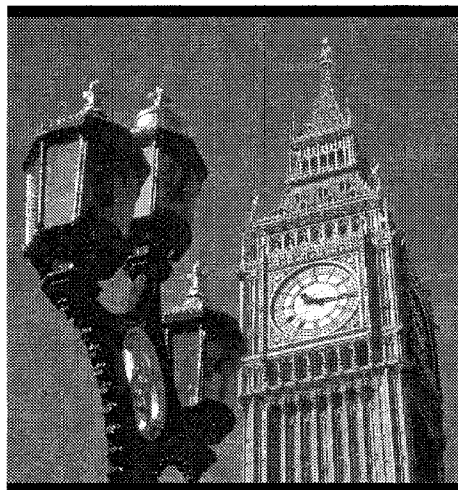
British Horology Times

NAWCC CHAPTER 159

News FROM CHAPTER 159

Our next scheduled meeting will be at the Southern Ohio Regional at the Drawbridge Estate in Ft. Mitchell, Kentucky at 2:00 PM on Friday, April 13, 2007. At that meeting I will make a presentation on a late 17th century, eight day English movement and its maker. I hope that those of you who attend find it interesting and informative. Our Annual Meeting and election of officers at the National is scheduled for 9:00 AM on Friday, June 8, 2007 in the Lookout Mountain Room of the Chattanooga Convention Center. At that meeting Phil Priestley will give a presentation on "English Watch Cases and Their Makers".

We now have a full slate of candidates for the chapter offices. As mentioned before, Ken Johnston is running for President, Lee Yelvington is running for Vice President, Dave Kern is running for Treasurer, and recently Julie Kern, Dave's wife, has agreed to run for the office of Secretary. We will still accept nominations for any of those offices from the floor during the meeting.



We'll climb the tower and listen to Big Ben strike noon.

On Friday, March 16, 2007, twenty-seven people from the U.S. and four from Canada will meet Phil and Jean Priestley in London for the beginning of Chapter 159's fourth England trip. The first few days will be spent in the London area, where, among other things, we will have the opportunity to climb the tower at Westminster to listen to Big Ben strike noon, visit the Guildhall Museum where the Clockmakers Company collection is displayed, visit the Students' Room at the British Museum and visit Greenwich Observatory where all of the restored Harrison timekeepers are displayed.

Then it is off to Keble College at Oxford University for an Antiquarian Horological Society seminar and the exhibition "Time and Place, English Country Clocks 1600-1840", the centerpiece of the tour. From there we go to Lincoln for a museum and cathedral clock tower visit. Then to the British Horological Institute at Upton Hall on the way to Cambridge for a visit to Anglesey Abbey. Between Cambridge and London we will visit the Duxford Air Museum before our final dinner. Then it is either home or an extended private continuation.

I look forward to seeing at least some of you at Ft. Mitchell and more of you in Chattanooga.

-Roger Gendron

EDITOR'S CORNER

I use the words from an 18th century London carol when I say, "I bring tidings of comfort and joy". Because we are blessed with adequate material to publish BHT right through the year 2007. Hang on to your thoughts and plans for articles. We'll need them later. For right now,

relax and enjoy this year's BHT issues as they come to life. Believe me, it's nice for me to forget the moaning and pleading and to be loaded with work. Sincere thanks to the members who made it possible.

-Paul Odendahl

SECOND LINE



CARTEL CLOCKS

By **Doug Cowan (OH)**

Some of these fancy clocks have been found in North America .

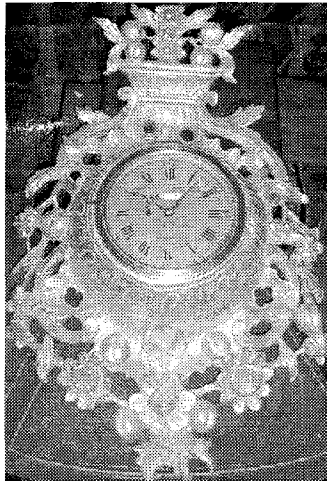


Figure 1. Thomas Smith, Norwich, ca 1760s.

I've decided to do a few columns on the subject of unusual British clocks seen in America. This time the topic is English cartel clocks. These clocks were made in the mid 1700s and putting aside lantern clocks and various alarm clocks made for the "below stairs" people (servants), they were about the only English wall clocks for salon use made during that time. Clock book authors call them the precursors of Act of Parliament and Dial clocks, but that is only true for the movements, which were usually 8 day timepieces with verge/crown wheel escapements and short bob pendulums. The cases certainly bore no resemblance to the later English wall clocks, being of heavily carved blocks of pine and very much in the French manner. In

fact, there was in England almost always a market for French furniture styles, and mid and late 1700s cartel clocks were made by many French makers, including Ferdinand Berthoud.

The French clocks were usually 8 day striking clocks, some crown wheel and verge, others anchor escapement, but they were housed in ornate bronze or gilt brass cases, with porcelain dials. They must have been very expensive and the English style copiers did not go that route.

Figure 1 is a circa 1760s cartel clock by Thomas Smith of Norwich, found in Texas. The case is of water gilded pine with a large crude cutout in the back to house the movement, a rectangular (longer

NEXT MEETINGS

April 13, 2PM in Ft. Mitchell KY.
June 8, 9AM, Lookout Mtn. Rm. in Chattanooga. Check your program for details.



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All correspondence and manuscripts should be sent to the Editor.

All applications for membership and payments of dues should be sent to the Treasurer.

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.

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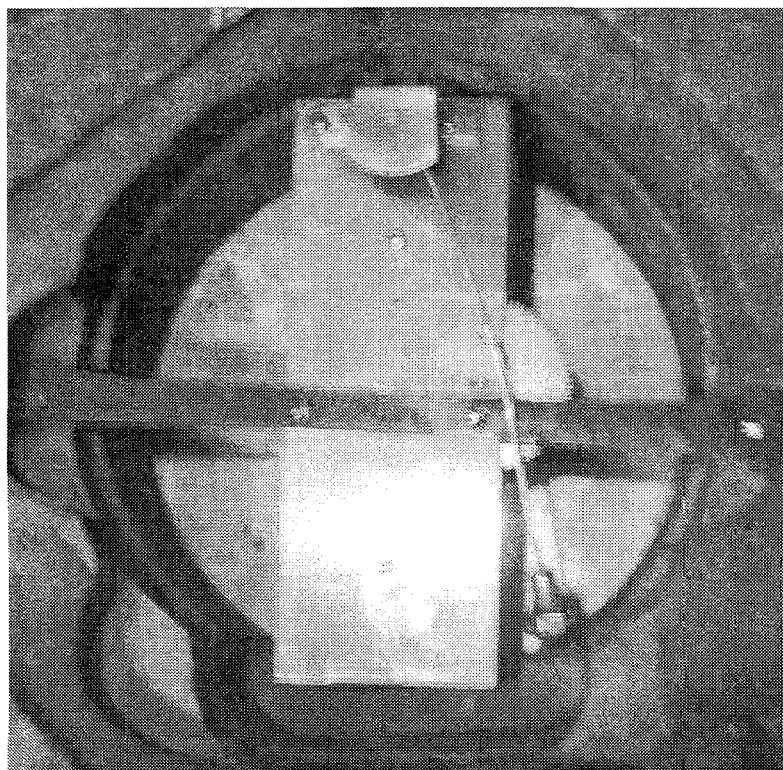


Figure 2. The back of the Thomas Smith, Norwich cartel clock, ca 1760s.

than it is wide) crown wheel/verge fusee movement (**Figure 2**). As is usual in these, the verge is fixed to the pendulum and pivots on a knife edge. Also typical is the iron strip across the back of the clock to hold the movement and dial firmly in the case. The dial, of silvered brass, is very English in execution, and very much more tasteful in my opinion than the “overblown” French dials. Although the back of the case is painted, the interior is not. Why have they not all split from unequal drying? The movements are usually not signed, but the dials always are.

There are a couple of slightly unusual features in this clock compared to others. First, the fusee winding arbor is located above and left of the center arbor, with the edge of the wheel protruding beyond the edge of the backplate. Smith was an apprentice to the well known maker **Marmaduke Storr** in London who also made cartel clocks but

wound them in the usual position, just below the center arbor. I wonder why Smith deviated from the usual design. Second, the wood case is almost symmetrical in design - when most of these cases were intentionally non-symmetrical. For that matter, who made the cases? There must have been carvers available, working from drawings or French examples, for there were cartel clock makers like **T. Smith**, Norwich, and **S. Jones**, Bath, and **T. Andrews**, Dover .

Other cartel clock makers were: **Thos. Bullock**, Bath, ca 1780, **Joshua Hewlett**, Bristol, ca 1760 (a two train clock) **Swaine**, Woodbridge, ca 1800 (this is late for these clocks), as well as several London makers such as: **Richard Coleman**, London, ca 1770 (unusual keyhole shaped plates),

Halifax, London (a two train clock),

G. Reason, London and **Wintmills**, London

Four of these clocks are currently in North America and they as well as the others mentioned all have differently designed gilt wooden cases. Again, book authors claim that they were not popular and therefore rare but I observe that they seem to have been made for some 50 years, about as long as their French counterparts (Ronald Rose says circa 1730-1780). To me that says that they were about as popular among their potential buyers as were the French cartels - they just didn't work in many English salons for style reasons. I'd like to hear of others known in North America and their makers. For security reasons, no owners names need be mentioned. Meanwhile, check out Dennis Radage's website to see two beautiful examples:

<www.pacificantiqueclocks.com>



Doug continues to delight with facts and pictures of all manner of British horology.



HARRISON IN THE ABBEY by Dave Kern (NY)

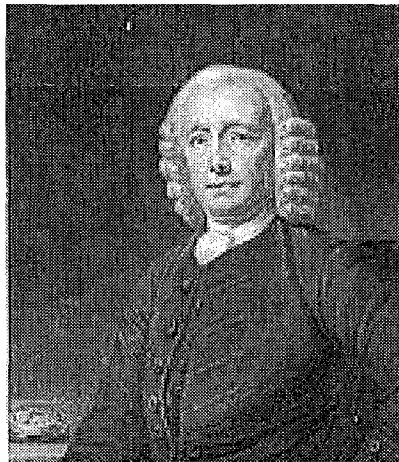
"In 1714, the British Government offered, by Act of Parliament, £20,000 for a solution which could provide longitude to within half a degree (2 minutes of time). The methods would be tested on a ship sailing over the ocean from Great Britain to any such point in the West Indies as the Commissioners choose without losing their longitude beyond the limits before mentioned..."

John Harrison's H4 won this prize.

My wife, Julie, and I had the good fortune to attend the unveiling of a memorial in Westminster Abbey in London, honoring John Harrison.

John Harrison was born in Barrow in Humber on March 24, 1693. He died March 24, 1776 and was buried in the churchyard of St. John's Church, Hampstead, North London. Fast forward to March 24, 2006, 230 years later, when Harrison was honored with a memorial in the form of a stone plaque placed in the floor of Westminster Abbey near the graves of Thomas Tompion and George Graham. The occasion was marked by an unveiling of the memorial, a reception and lectures at the Institute of Civil Engineers which is not far from the Abbey. The occasion promised to be British Horology at its best and I must say we were not disappointed.

The unveiling was performed by HRH Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh. The plaque itself has a longitude line appropriately across at "00 degrees, 07 minutes, 35 sec-



John Harrison, 1693-1776

onds, west longitude". One might ask how in the world anyone determines such exact longitude inside of a building where the sun doesn't shine and where GPS and even the use of a magnetic compass are blocked by the metal roof and surroundings.

The pageant was primarily arranged by the Clockmakers' Company and Sir Arnold Wolfendale, FRS, 14th Astronomer Royal, Freeman of the Clockmakers' Company and President of the Antiquarian Horological Society. Many participants in dress appropriate to their positions in the various organizations they represented, added to the color as did the Royal Marine Band from Britannia Royal Naval College in Dartmouth.

After a reception with approximately 250 attendees, there were several lectures. The first was

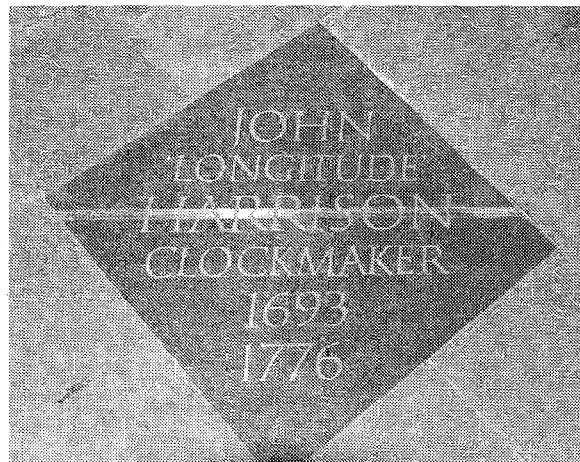
by Dr. John Taylor, owner of one of Harrison's early wooden works which was on display in the Abbey. As most of us know, Harrison, after many years of effort, developed a clock, H-4, more closely resembling a watch, which succeeded in achieving the accuracy set out by the Board of Longitude for a seagoing timepiece. Along the way he tackled some of the accuracy problems related to precision timekeeping. Dr. Taylor, in his lecture on "John Harrison's Early Wooden Clocks", covered a few of his firsts. They are:

- Grasshopper Escapement
- Rementoire
- Antifriction Wheels
- Roller Pinions
- Gridiron Pendulum
- Maintaining Power incorporated into the winding drum.

Dava Sobel, whose reporting on the Longitude Symposium, the NAWCC Seminar at Harvard, which led to a book simply called "Longitude", spoke on "Harrison the Man". She highlighted various personal struggles with the Board of Longitude before Harrison received all of the prize money. Will An-



The Duke of Edinburgh unveiling the memorial.



The memorial tablet embedded in the floor of Westminster Abbey.

draws, in his talk on "Harrison's Contributions in Perspective", covered some more about the history of his clocks, his approach to solving the problems and some of the solutions he came up with.

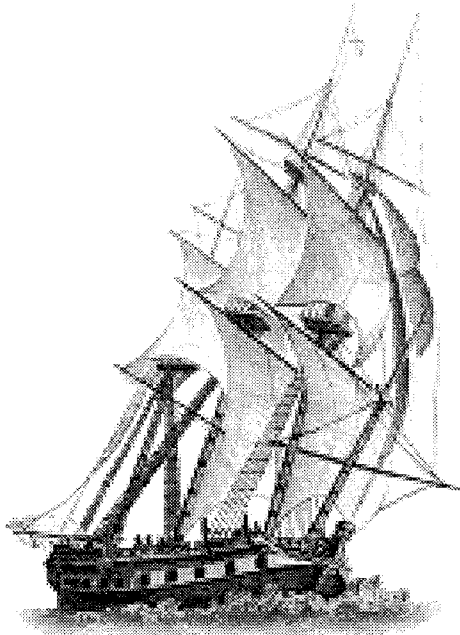
Legend has it that Harrison's early clocks achieved an accuracy of one second in three months as deter-

mined by viewing a star transit which lined up passing his neighbor's chimney. For any of us who have tried such a thing, I'm sure we would view that as quite an achievement indeed.

A booklet was published by the Clockmakers' Company enti-

tled "Harrison in the Abbey" covering the occasion and the lectures. A copy of the book may be obtained by contacting The Clerk at the Worshipful Company of Clockmakers in London. Telephone from the U.S.: 011-44-20-7638-5500 or email <clockmakersco@aol.com>

See **HARRISON** on page 6



Harrison's timekeeper had to perform on a ship like this 18th century sailing ship.



This is H4, Harrison's timekeeper that accomplished the task.

HARRISON from page 5

John Harrison is featured in the June 2006 Antiquarian Horological Society Journal. It is well worth the purchase, with articles by Sir Arnold, Andrew King, Will Andrews, John Taylor, Jonathan

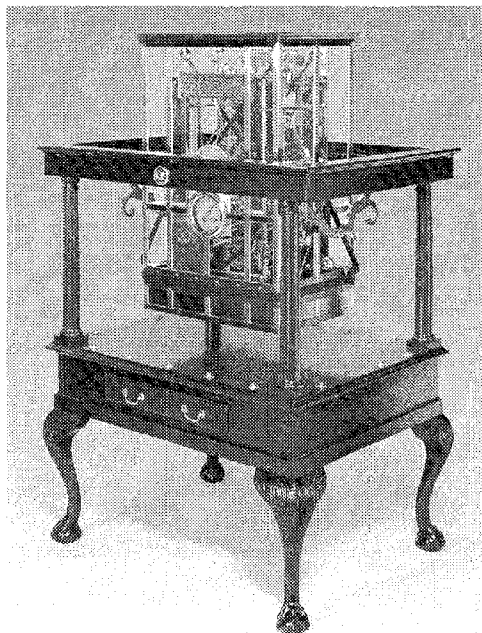
Betts and Phil Priestley. Anyone not already a member of the Society can purchase the Journal from The Antiquarian Horological Society, New House, High Street, Ticehurst, East Sussex, TN5 7AL, England. Tele-

phone from the U.S. is 011-441-580-200155, or email <secretary@ahsoc.demon.co.uk>

British horology at its best!



Reconstruction of Harrison's H2 by Malcolm Leach. It took 15 years to gather information and to construct the timekeeper, from 1986 to 2001.



Dave Kern is Treasurer of our Chapter 159. He has helped with this, his first article.

MY IRISH KEY-WIND WATCH

By Lewis Miller (CA)

I was born in 1930, a depression baby. I have been married to my wife, Elizabeth, for 50 years. We have two children and four grandchildren; the oldest grandchild is 23 and graduating from Michigan State University. The youngest is 10 years old.

I am a retired physicist/engineer. I worked in designing rockets and nuclear detection equipment for the Navy. After obtaining my Ph.D. in Materials Sciences from Stanford University I worked in lasers. My last position before retirement was to teach physics, engineering, computer science, and mathematics at a local college.

In 1987 and 1988 I taught



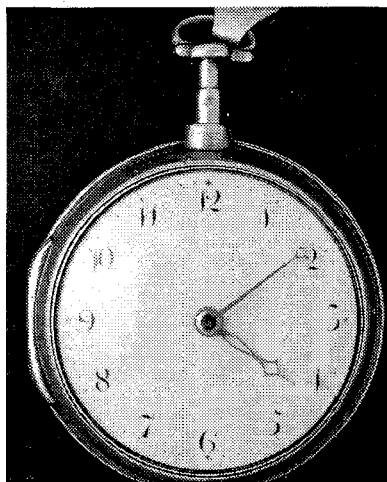
LEWIS MILLER



engineering and computer science at Oxford University in England. My wife and I were always interested in antiques. We traveled around England and Scotland during this time collecting various antiques to bring back home. At this time I became interested in pocket watches. Key-wind

watches fascinated me. I started collecting them in silver cases - I could not afford to purchase them in gold cases. I was able to purchase 30 watches by the time we returned home. They range in age from 1769 to 1905 - a late date for a key-wind watch. They come in single and pair cased design and all the watches run. I also purchased a number of books on watches so that I could research my collection. I am still collecting and researching my watches. Since neither my two sons or my four grandchildren have shown any interest in my watch collection, I have willed them, with my watch books to the NAWCC Watch Museum.

Even though my wife and I lived in England, where I taught at Oxford, we never did take a tour of Ireland. When I had the opportunity to go to a meeting in Portugal, we decided to stop by in England to visit friends and then take a two week tour of Ireland. I found out that anyone over the age of 70 could not rent a car so we had to scramble to find a bus tour.



Dial of Lew Miller's Irish key-wind watch.

During the lunch stops, most of the people on the tour rested and ate lunch for the full time. My wife and I purchased a small snack and walked around the village or town.

During a stop in a village near Sligo in Northern Ireland, we saw a small antique shop. While my wife looked for things for our home, I was looking for key-wind watches. At the back of the store in a pile of old jewelry I found a pair cased

See *IRISH WATCH*, Page 8

IRISH WATCH from page 1

key-wind watch.. I collect silver cased key-wind watches. There was no key and the owner did not know if it would run. It looked very unusual and I thought it would make an interesting addition to my collection. Since I could not determine if it would run, I talked the owner into letting me have it for 85 Euro cash! The owner of the shop wrapped it very well since we still had over a week of our tour left. We just made it back to the bus before it left for the next stop on the tour. I am always glad that we do not sit at lunch on tours, but walk around to see the sights and look for items for our house.

When I returned home I was delighted to see that the watch did run and keep reasonable time for a watch that was so old. I used the following watch references to determine the history of the watch: Britten's Old Clocks and Watches and Their Makers, 9th Edition; and Watch Case Makers of England, NAWCC Bulletin Supplement 20.

I found the following information:

Maker of the movement was Robert Clench. Dublin Ireland, 1797-?

Maker of the case was Richard Clarke, 4 Ship Court, Old Bailey, London, 1805. ("RC/RC" on the pair cases which makes me wonder why there is a vertical

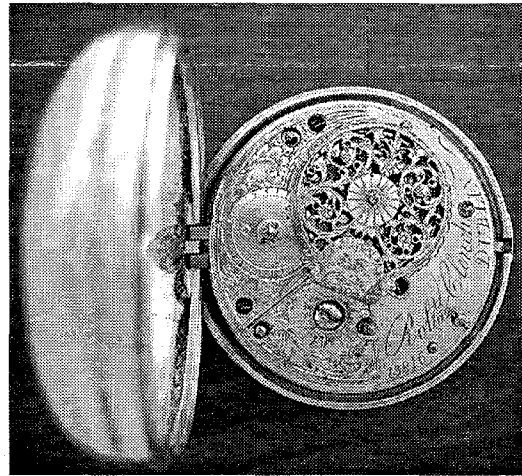
repeat of the initials on the case.)

Hallmark is London, 1805.

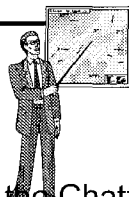
Movement type is KW/KS verge fusee, swing-out.

Key is #3,

The watch has a Tompion regulator with decorated and pierced cock. ⌚



Lew Miller's Robert Clench, Dublin Irish Pair Cased Watch.



Members who attend the Chattanooga NAWCC National Meeting in June will have the unique opportunity of hearing Tom Spittler speak on "**Southern Horology, An Overview**".

This will be the featured NAWCC lecture and all NAWCC members may attend.

Tom is co-founder of our Chapter 159.



Tom Spittler

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