

Parker Clocks

In this issue we are pleased to provide a reprint of John Darrow's article entitled *Parker Clock Co. Designs*, originally printed in the NAWCC Bulletin, June of 2001. The article is found on pages 3 - 8 of this issue.

Patent Searches on the Internet

Throughout Mr. Darrow's article reference is made to information found in patents issued to the Parker Company. In this information age patent information is now available on the internet. The URL is

<http://www.uspto.gov/patft/>

The site permits searching on keywords (only on patents back to 1976) as well as patent access by number (*Patent Number Search*). For example, on the back of an old Hotpoint Automatic Range Timer, Lux printed one of their patent numbers as 1338641. After clicking the *Patent Number Search* button, the next web page provides for the patent

Minutes are worth more than money.

Spend them wisely.

-Thomas P. Murphy

number of interest. Put in the number and click *Search*. Figure 1 on page 2 displays the web page that results.

It states that the Full Text is not available for this patent. That's because of the year of the patent. Full text is only available for more current patent patents. For the early patents the drawings are true but text has the appearance of a photocopy. Go ahead and click the button *Images*. Viewing the patent requires a certain graphics viewer (which you may already have). If you don't have a viewer, you can download one (free) at the following site

Instructions to Authors

All are encouraged to submit articles for publication. Please include your name, address and phone number with the article.

Although certainly not a complete list, suggestions for topics are

- . Specific alarm clocks or manufacturers
- . Unique designs
- . Special methods of cleaning
- . Descriptions of interesting repairs.

Photos along with the text are always appreciated. Please email to the editor at

saraandmary@sbcglobal.net

Alarm Clock Chapter : Annual Dues \$15.00
Quarterly Newsletter

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<http://www.alternatiff.com/>

Once your computer is loaded with the graphics viewer you can access patent information (see Figure 2 below). The drawings of the patent are always followed by the text. The features of the software are straightforward.

Easy availability of patent literature is a great feature of the internet. Patents of individual items are informative and collections of patents provide an interesting time series of technological advancements.

-- Mary Maier --

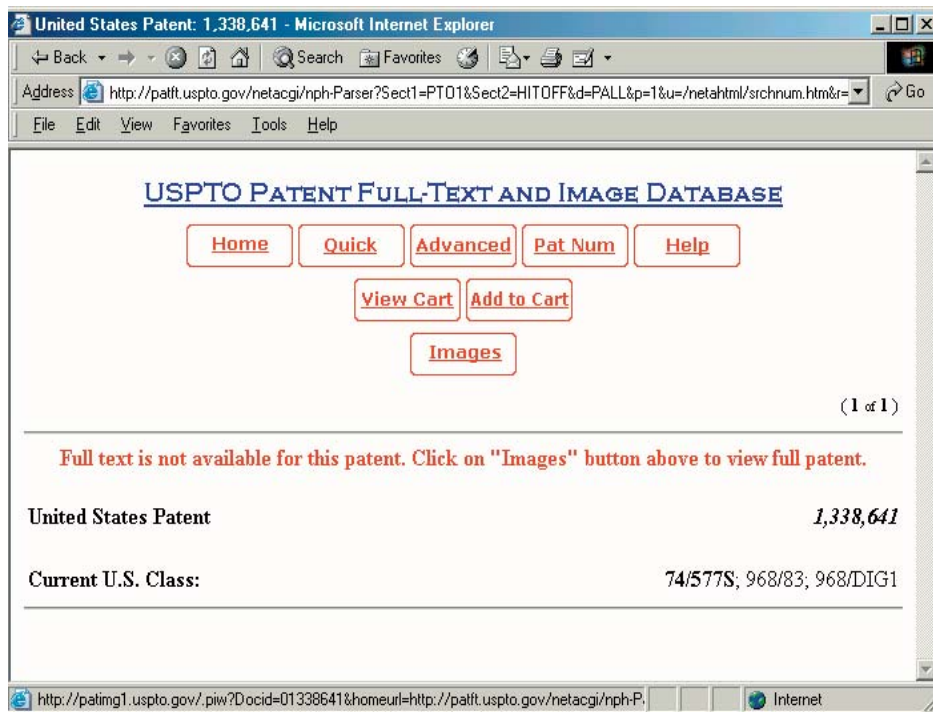


Figure 1.

For older patents, only images can be accessed.

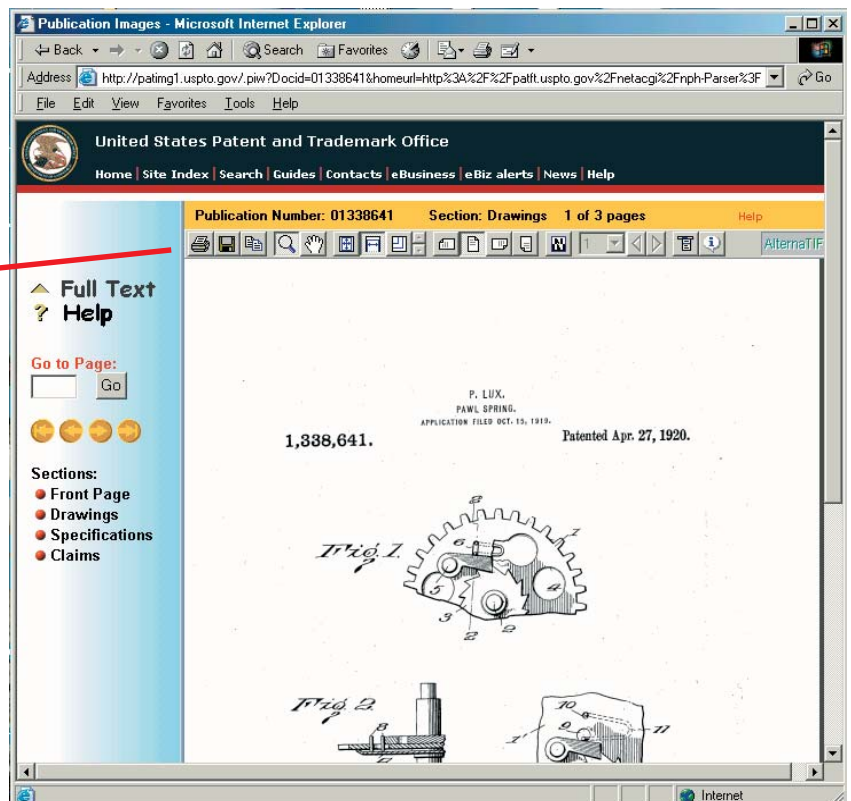
Just click on the *Images* button to retrieve the pages of your patent (as shown in Figure 2).

Figure 2.

The drawings for the patent are presented first and appear to be one-to-one representations of the original.

The buttons on the toolbar can be used to manipulate the image.

The disk button (second from left) permits saving the patent as a PDF file. The magnifying button (fourth button from left) lets you zoom in on details of text (its difficult to read the entire page) and graphics. Note that on this browser the graphics viewer being used is 'Alterna TIFF' (last button on right). Downloading this (free) viewer is mentioned in the text of this article.



Parker Clock Co. Designs

by John Darrow (PA)

Clocks made by Parker Clock Co. or Parker and Whipple have become quite collectible, sometimes at pretty high prices. This may seem strange, since they made mainly 30-hour novelty clocks (some quite ornate), and alarm clocks. They made a few mantel clocks, but most people will never see one. They are sought after partly because the Parker Clock Co. seemed to believe that if someone other than them had done a design, it must automatically be wrong, and they had to do it differently. It has been an intriguing mystery to the writer as to who was responsible for all of these strange designs. There are a dozen patents listed by Parker Clock Company, but none of them relate to observed designs on the alarm clocks.

In the April 1999 BULLETIN on page 173, in an article on Mark Lane by Bryan Vernimb, mention is made of a grandson, Almeron Mark Lane, and an escapement patent by him is shown. A.M. Lane is said to have been a "superintendent of the Park (sic) Clock Co., Meridan, CT." The article further says, "The patent was not assigned to any company, and it is not known if the escapement was ever used." I recognized it immediately as the one used in Parker novelty movements (Fig. 14). Could this be the answer to the mystery? Kristen Polston, former NAWCC Librarian, supplied me with a list of an incredible 46 patents by A.M. Lane. A few hours at the microfilm viewer at Pittsburgh's Carnegie Library produced the following information from the listed patent numbers:

348980 – Escape fork like Parker's (Fig. 1).

348982 – Calendar mechanism like that used in Parker novelty clocks (Fig. 2).

389931 – Key and set arrangement as used on novelty movement (Fig. 3).

390786 – Clock and bell side-by-side on base containing alarm works (Fig. 4).

391802 – Clock on top of base containing alarm work and bell (Fig. 5).

403274 – Thumb wheel setting for alarm (Fig. 6).

403275 – Clock and bell side-by-side on base containing strike mechanism, similar to 445607 (Fig. 7).

419686 – Clock over bell containing alarm mechanism (Fig. 8).

423058 – Spring mounted to rear of movement, as in novelty (Fig. 9).

424797 – Clock over two bells, reciprocating hammer (Fig. 10).

436921 – Key and setting arrangement for novelty movement (Fig. 11).

436922 – Rotary alarm hammer (Fig. 12).

549242 – Front wind, rear bell, rotary alarm hammer (Fig. 13).

593849 – Escapement shown in BULLETIN, April 1999, page 173 (Fig. 14).

637876 – Full-sized alarm; rear bell, rotary hammer (46) (Fig. 15). Note also fastener 13 and 15, keys, etc.

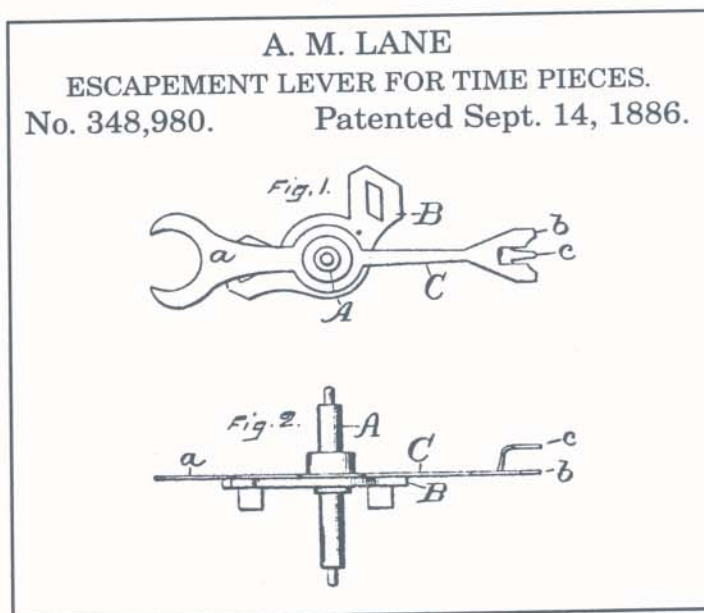
639587 – Full-sized alarm; rear bells, alarm set arbor through bell (Fig. 16).

748290 – Escapement for full-sized alarm clock (Fig. 17). Note tooth shape, rear springs.

775010 – Square movement with intermittent alarm (Fig. 18).

It can be seen that these patents cover much of what was strange about Parker's designs, including: a rear mounted small bell or two (Figs. 15 and 16); bells hit by a rotary hammer (Figs. 12, 13, and 16); three plate movements with springs in their own sections (Figs. 13, 15, 17 and 18); gear tooth shapes (not shown accurately); front-wound alarm with planetary gearings (used but not shown in Fig. 13); set arbor passing through hole in rear bell (Fig. 16); push-button release from case (Figs. 15 and 16); and visible escapement (not shown). In small movement alarms the design aberrations continue, including use of separate alarm works; movement set on top of one bell or between and above two bells (Figs. 4, 5, 7, 8, 10 and 12); odd key and setting arrangement

Figure 1.



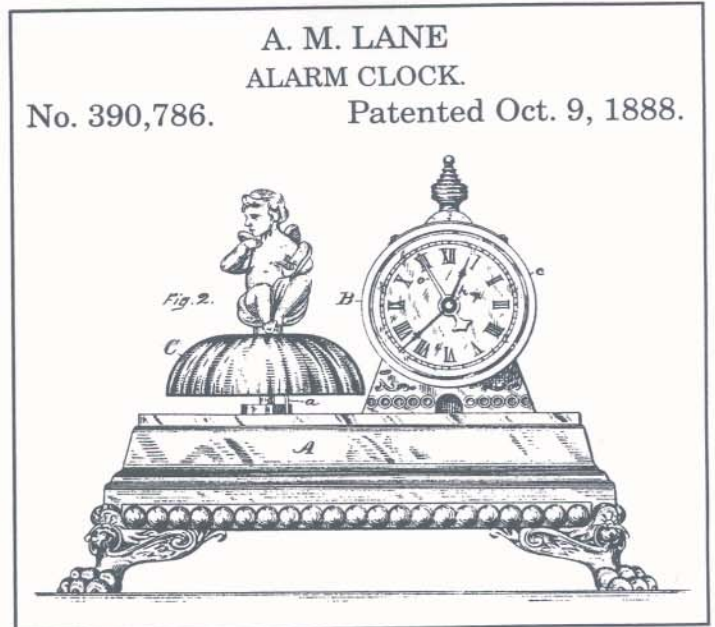
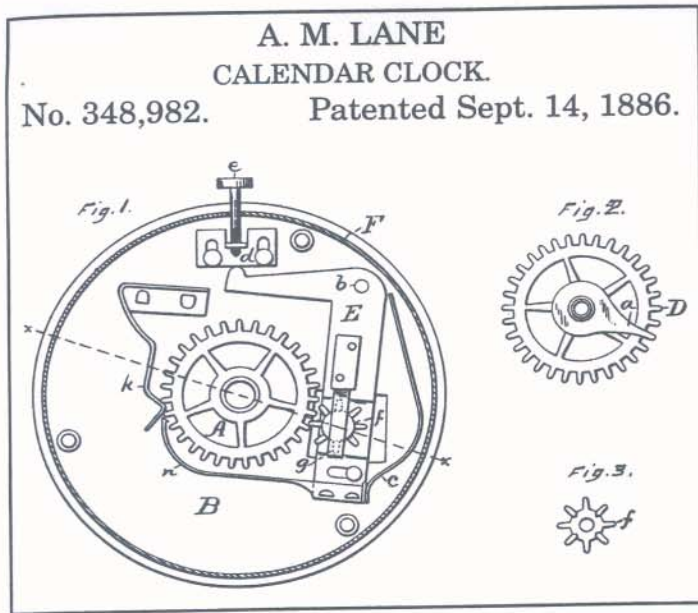
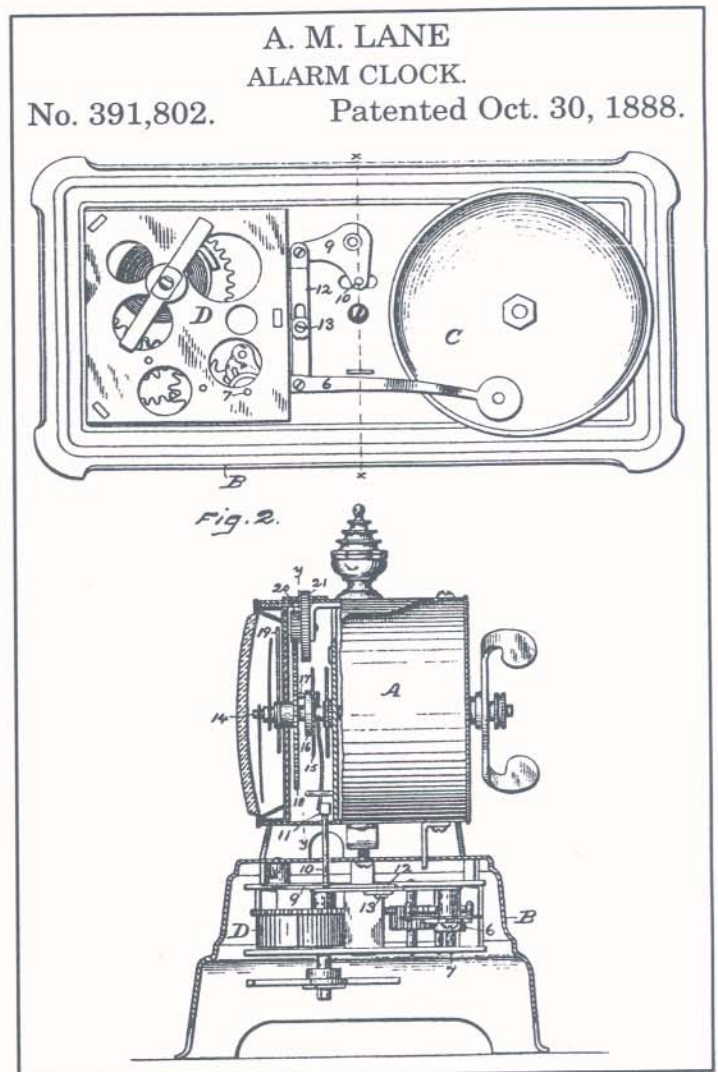
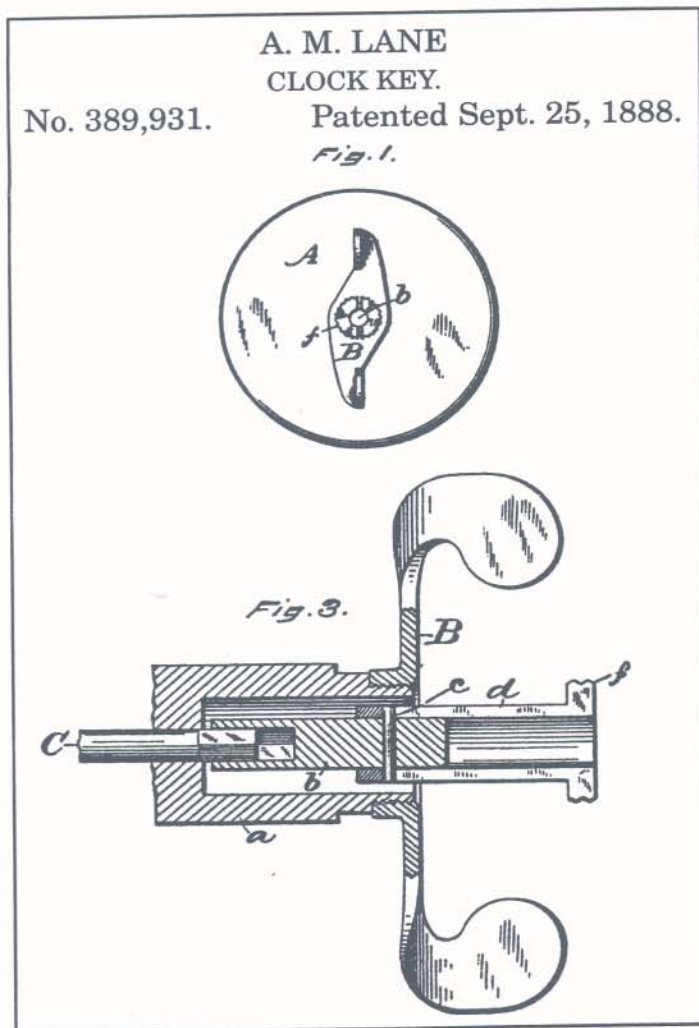


Figure 2, above. Figure 3, below.
Figure 4, above right. Figure 5, below right.



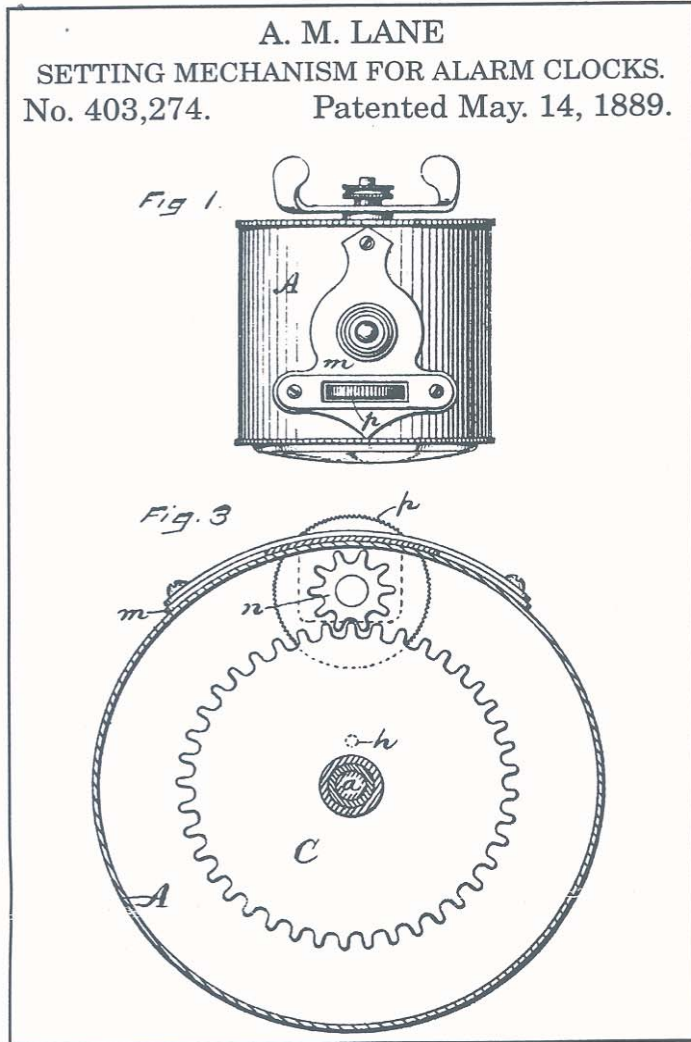


Figure 6, above. Figure 7, below.

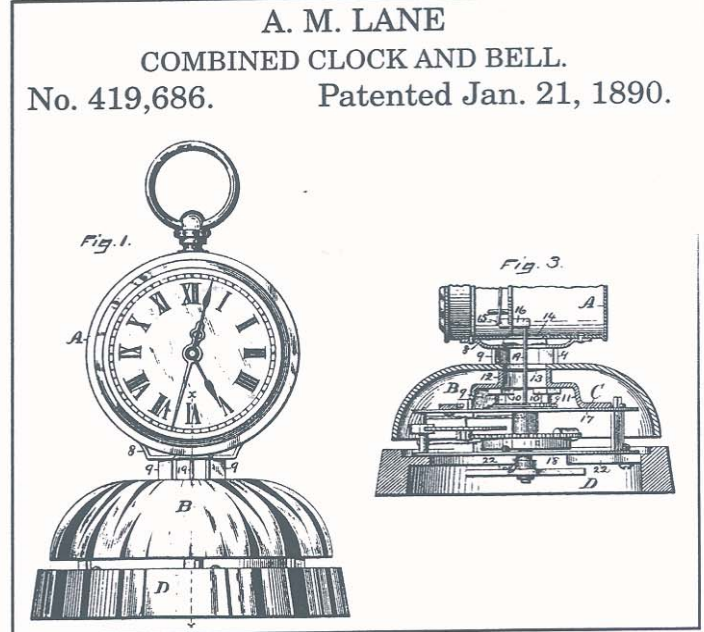
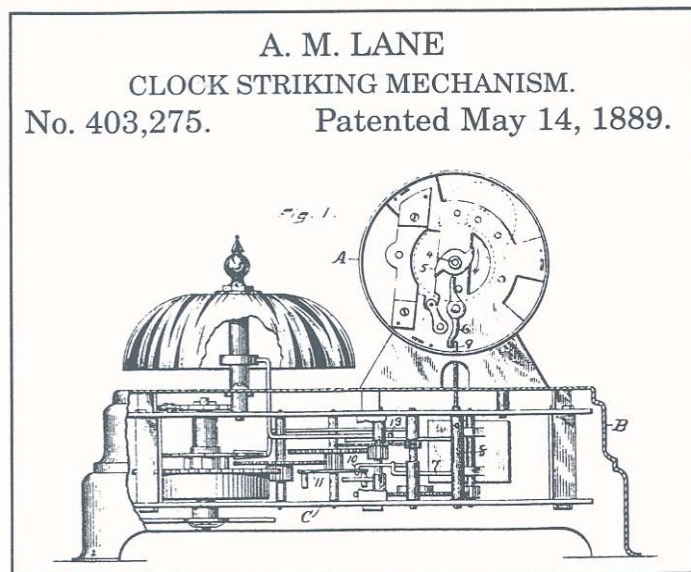


Figure 8.

with detached key (Figs. 3, 9 and 11); calendar design (Fig. 2); and time movement and bell side-by-side on a base containing alarm or strike movement (Figs. 4, 7, 10 and 12). The location of springs outside the movement had been done before by S. Terry and others, and the pointed gear teeth were probably not patentable—being involute, where everyone else spaced the two sides of the teeth for greater strength, Parker brought the two curved sides together into a point. They later went to a conventional tooth shape on the main wheel, probably because of breakage problems; either tooth configuration pre-dates Parker.

This group covers a period from 1886 to 1904, during which time Almeron Mark Lane was responsible for most of what was notable in Parker clocks. Our hats are off to him! Strangely, none of these patents were assigned to Parker (or anyone else), which is why this story was not discovered earlier. Thanks to Bryan Vernimb for giving me the key to solving the mystery.

About the Author

John started “dabbling” with old alarm clocks at about the age of 10, and gradually learned how things work. He was an electronic engineer (University of Michigan, 1949), eventually specializing in Fail-Safe circuit design, with about 40 patents. John retired gradually (1985-1990). He has been the president of Chapter 37 at various times. John gave a “walk through talk” at the Cleveland National on Art Nouveau and Art Deco.

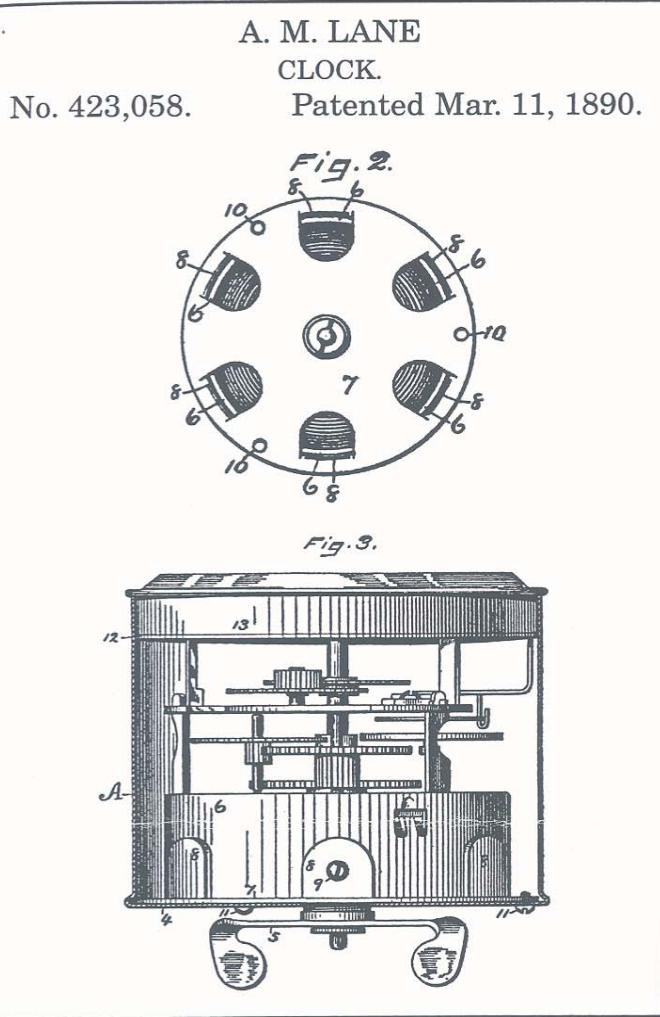


Figure 9.

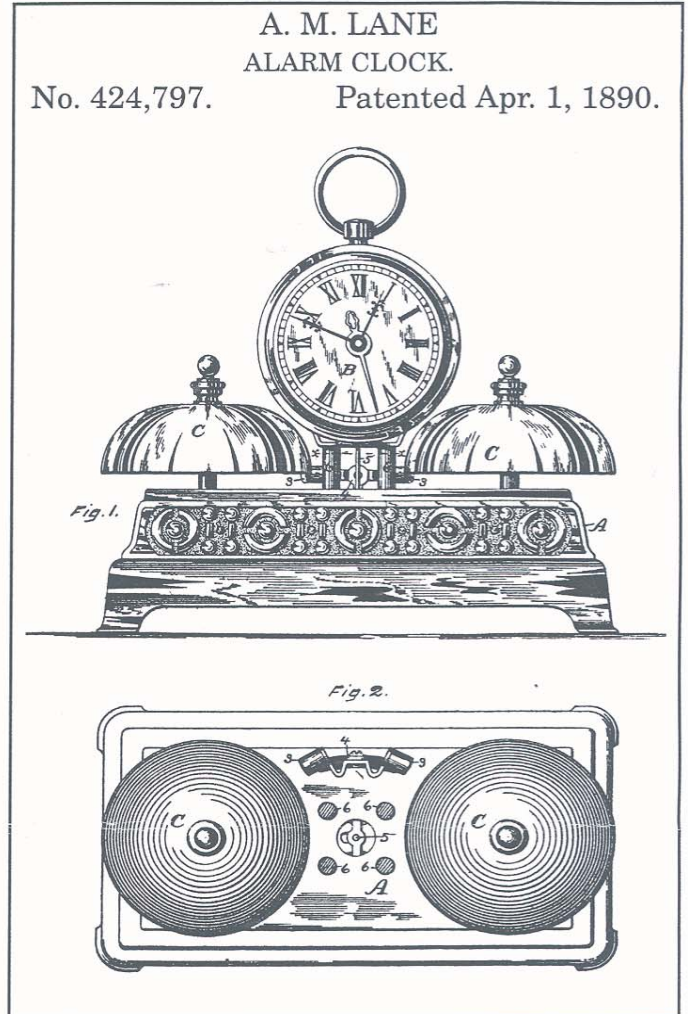


Figure 10.

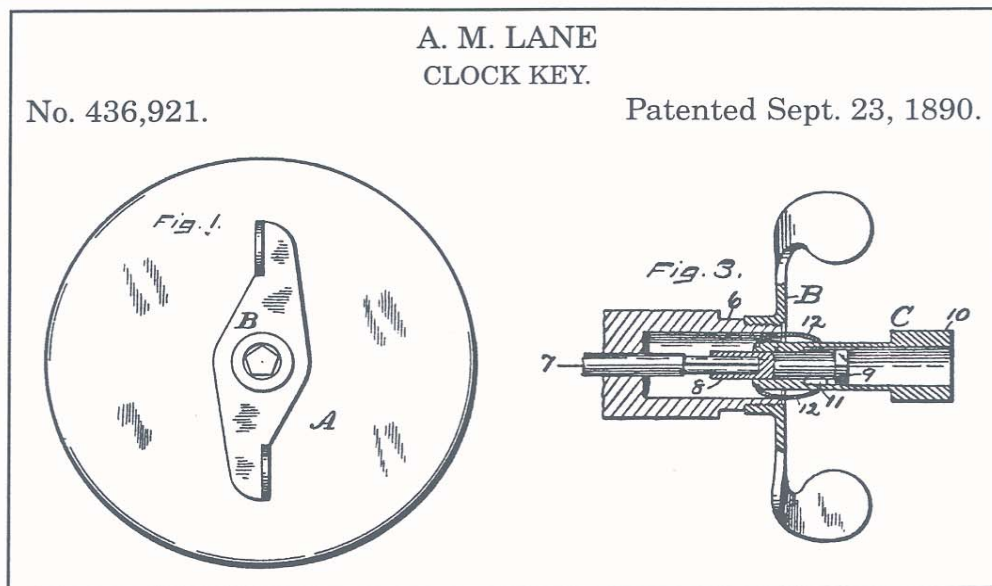


Figure 11.

A. M. LANE
ALARM CLOCK.

No. 436,922. Patented Sept. 23, 1890.

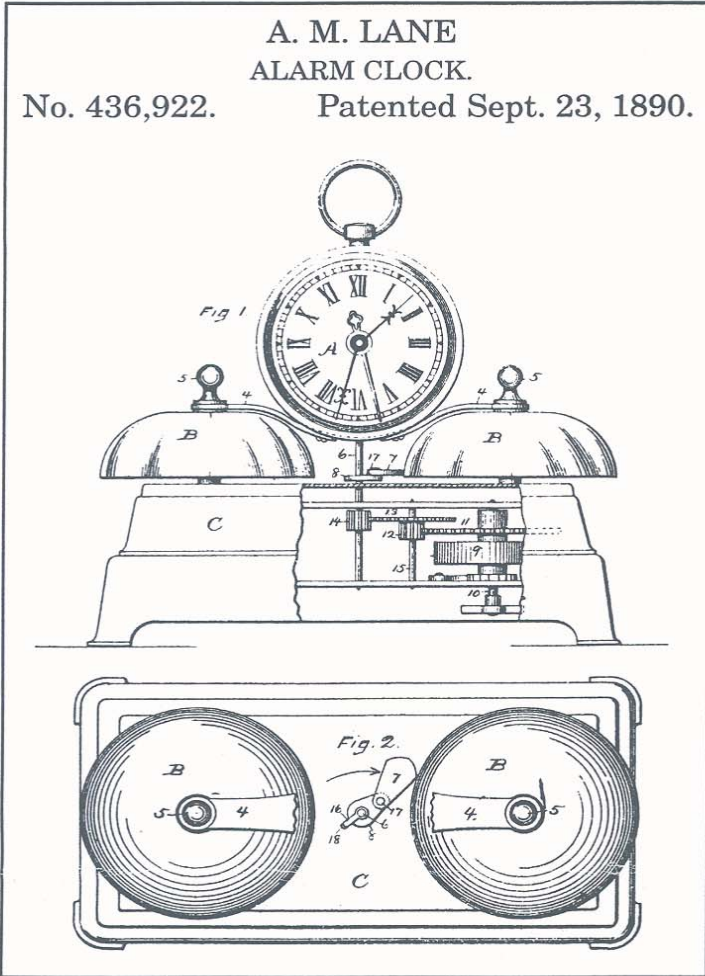
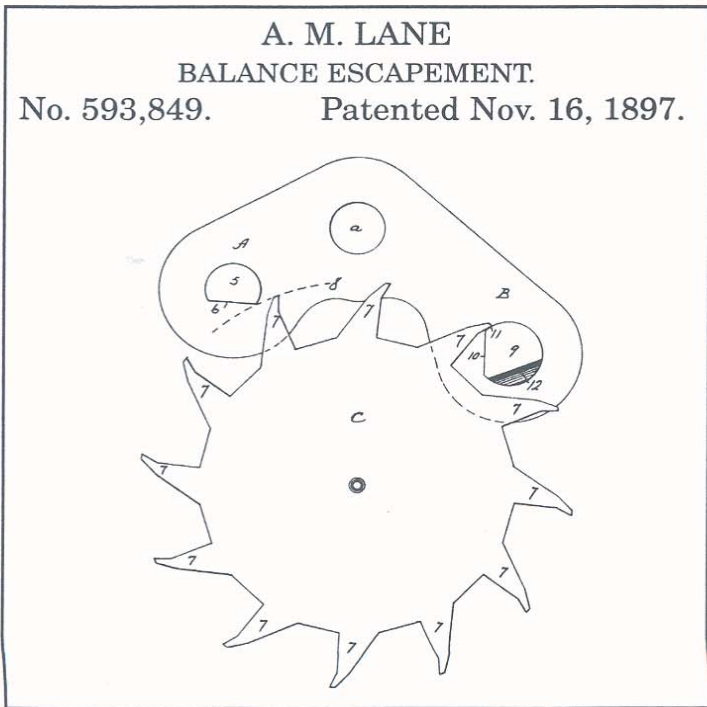


Figure 12, above. Figure 14, below.

A. M. LANE
BALANCE ESCAPEMENT.

No. 593,849. Patented Nov. 16, 1897.



A. M. LANE
ALARM CLOCK.

No. 549,242. Patented Nov. 5, 1895.

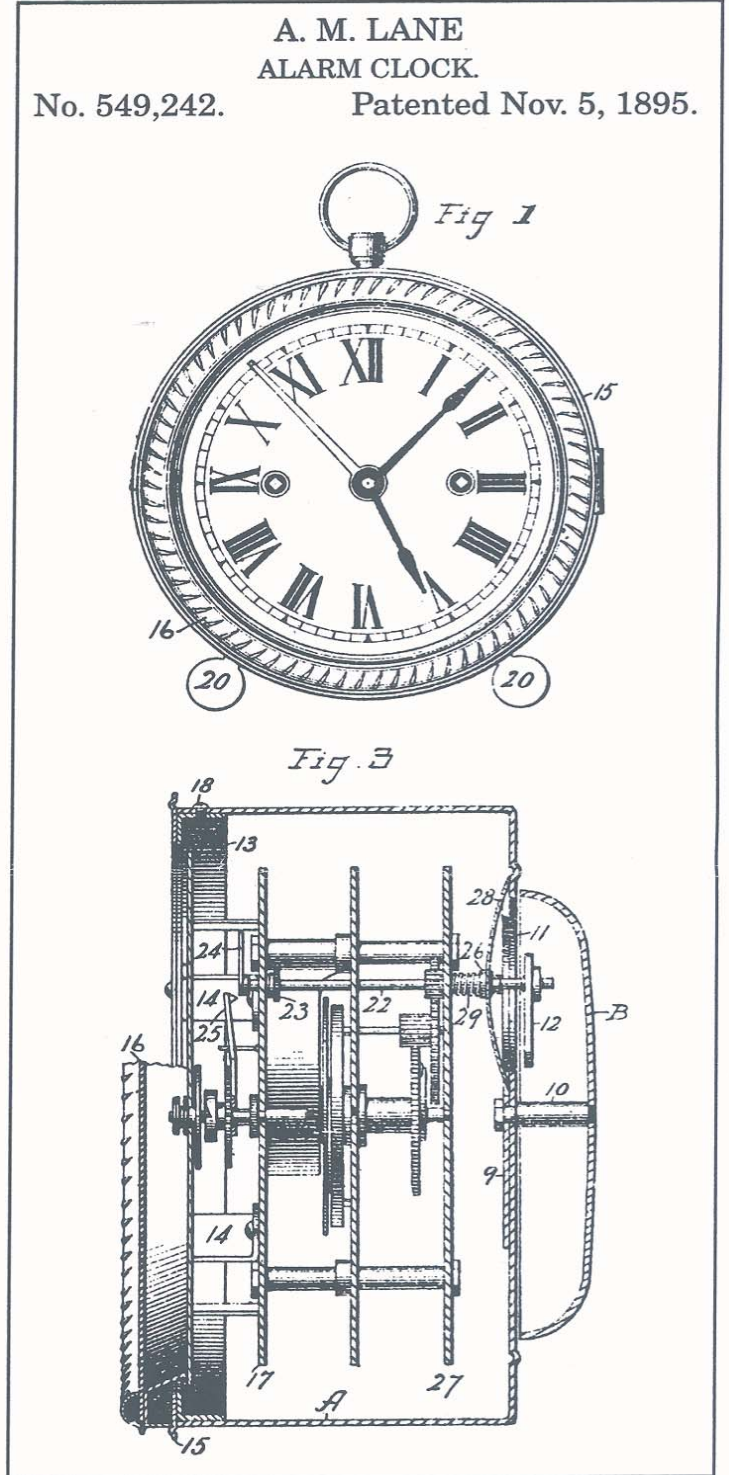
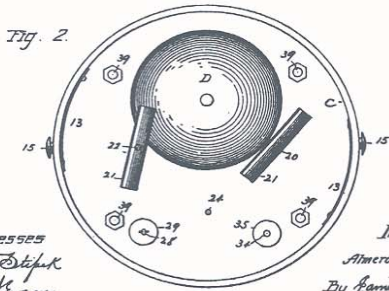
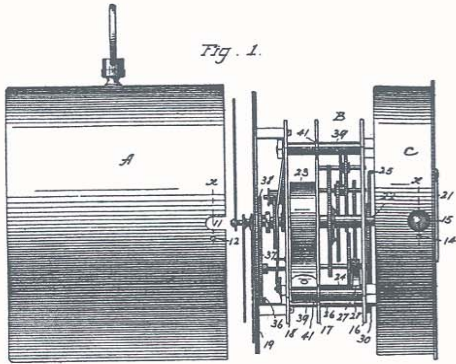


Figure 13.

A. M. LANE
CLOCK.

No. 637,876.

Patented Nov. 28, 1899.



Witnesses
C. W. Bishop
P. J. Ryan

Inventor
Almeron M. Lane
By James H. Clark
Att'y.

A. M. LANE
CLOCK SETTING MECHANISM.

No. 639,587.

Patented Dec. 19, 1899.

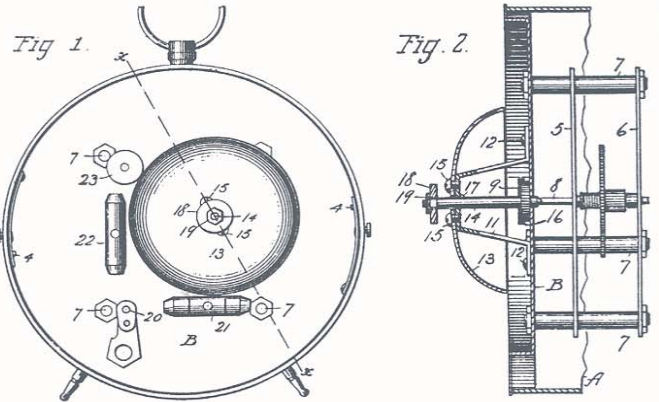
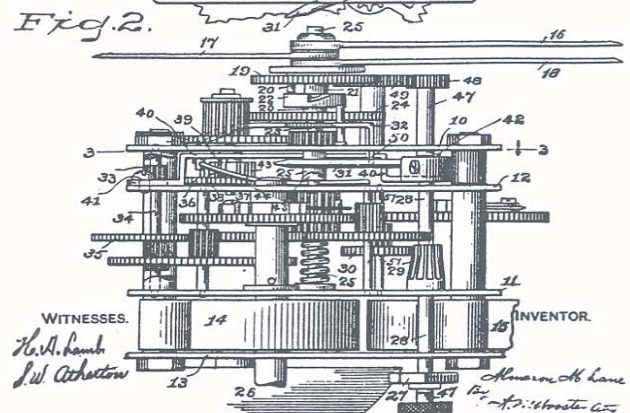
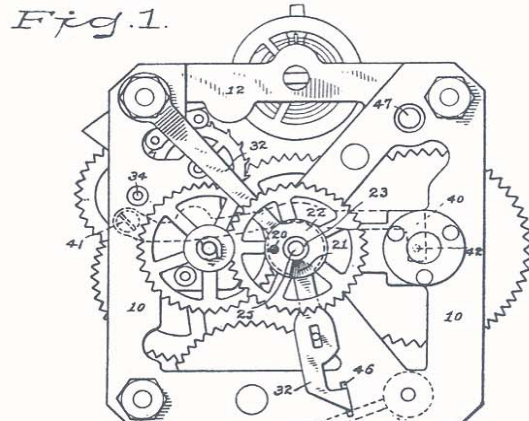


Figure 15, left. Figure 16, above.
Figure 17, below left. Figure 18, below.

A. M. LANE
INTERMITTENT ALARM CLOCK

No. 755,010.

Patented Nov. 15, 1904.

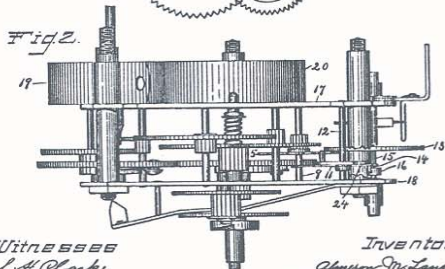
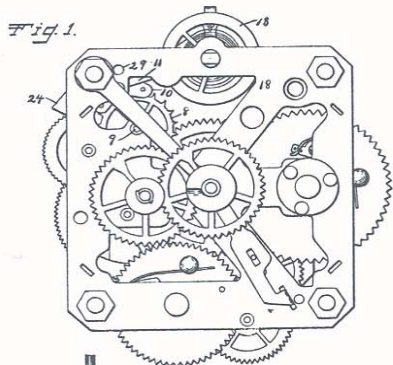


WITNESSES.
H. W. Lamb
J. W. Asherton
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By J. P. Johnston
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A. M. LANE
BALANCE ESCAPEMENT.

No. 748,290.

Patented Dec. 29, 1903.



Witnesses
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F. J. Brown

Inventor.
Almeron M. Lane
By James H. Clark
Att'y.