
Errors in Manufacturing of the Pickett C19 Collins Radio Microwave Slide Rule

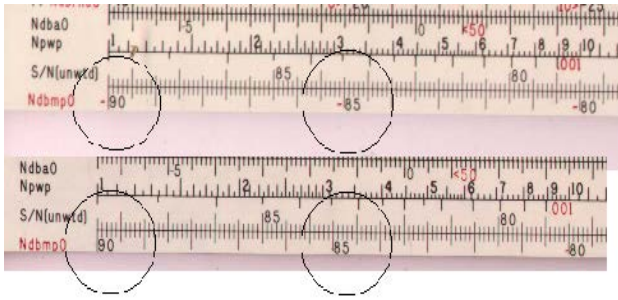
Jay Francis

Pickett is known to have made numerous custom or specific slide rules for various customers or applications. Some of the more common ones are the rules for the Cleveland Institute of Electronics, Capitol Radio Engineering, and the National Radio Institute. Pickett also made an aerial photographic rule, a Fisher Steam Valve Sizing rule, and slide rules for statistics, power line transmission, electronic engineering, and microwave engineer-

ing.

One special application rule was the Pickett C19 Collins Radio Microwave slide rule. I have also heard of a C18, but I have not seen one. I found my first Pickett C19 slide rule in 1993. I thought it was a very interesting slide rule, since I worked for Collins Radio/Rockwell International in Cedar Rapids, Iowa in the mid-to late 1970s. I did not work in the Microwave Division, but I was familiar with some of the scales. This slide rule re-

minded me of my college days studying for an electrical engineering degree.



Then, in 1996, I met a retired Collins Rockwell engineer who had worked in the microwave and transmission area. As most collectors do, we talked about past experiences and, since both of us had worked for Collins Rockwell, we had a common thread of interest. During our conversation, he mentioned that Pickett had made some mistakes on the C19 slide rule. He did not know what mistakes were made or which scales were in error on the slide rule. He had only heard of the mistakes. Pickett reissued the C19 slide rule without indicating the mistake or using a different part number. He thought there were

two reissues. This would indicate that there are three different versions of the C19 out there. If you take the two different colors into consideration, that would make a total of six different versions of the C19.

Two years later this gentleman offered to sell the actual Pickett C19-T slide rule that he used while he worked at Collins Rockwell.

I happen to have come across three C19-T Pickett slide rules since I started collecting slide rules, and I believe I have found one of the mistakes. I scanned two of the slide rules, and the same section of each of them is shown in the figure below. Please observe the Ndbmp0 scale on each slide rule. Notice that all the values in the scan of the Ndbmp0 scale on the upper unit are negative, while the values for only 90 and 85 on the lower unit are positive. The remaining values of the Ndbmp0 scale on both slide rules were negative. Although I am not familiar with the Ndbmp0 scale, I do know that any db scale will not change polarity within this range. Therefore, the Ndbmp0 scale of the C19 slide rule depicted in the lower scan was in error.

If there are any other Oughtred Society members with Pickett C19 slide rules, I would gladly compare the scales in an effort to determine the other reported error.