



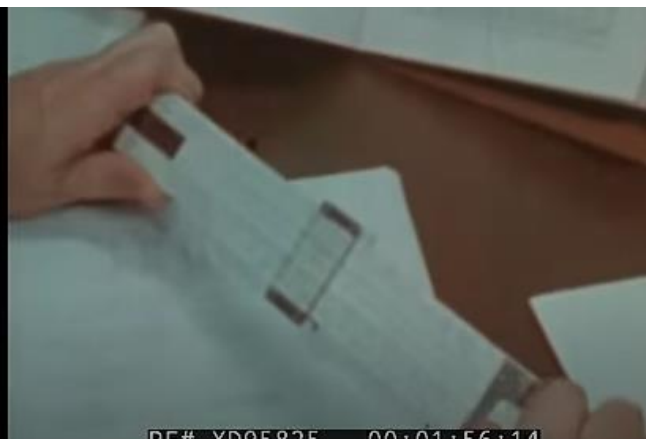
Introduction

Happy New Year to one and All! I trust that everyone survived the Fester Season unscathed, had a smashing Xmas, and that all are now ready to face a New Year filled with vim and vigour and that the Xmas break ensured that everyone is fired up and inspired to write something, anything, for either Newsletter or else this year's Gazette! My very grateful thanks to all who sent Festive greetings to Rod, the elves and myself, always much appreciated!

Just before sending this off for Rod's ministrations, I checked and Trump has yet to buy Essex – thank goodness!

Sort of Skid Stick p.s.

People and Slide Rules (Contd:)



There have been at least a couple of new sightings of People and Slide Rules. Or else a sighting in a film or a similar occasion, mentioned in various sister publications. First is a most interesting video from the US based Argus Camera organisation which was flagged up by Dennis Boone on the Slide Rules group: *"The linked video is a 1953 documentary on Argus camera and lens production. At about 1:51, a lens designer is seen using a slide rule. My eyes can't make out what it is, though the cursor frame says Hemmi to me."* See:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=24MUcU_9Gro

Hon Ed; I tried very hard to snip a sensible picture from the 27 minute film showing both user and slide rule and failed miserably! My effort is shown left and I would not argue at the Hemmi credentials. The film itself is a truly fascinating look at how cameras were made in the 1950's.

Rod then notified us of yet another interesting database that I was not aware of: *"Your slide rule sighting has been added to the Slide Rule Sighting Database"* at: <https://sliderules.lovett.com/groupsio/sightings/start.html>

Intrigued I then spent a Happy hour on the site and started delighted with the picture of a Klein bottle (fascinating devices) with slide rule, loved the Mosand tale of the Curta and Customs, and learned of Tom Swift



Rod then sent me a picture: *"Herewith attached a scene from "The Time Machine" 2002 from a deleted scene on the film"* It is indeed quite fascinating to try and make sense of why a Thacher's Calculator might appear in some sort of chemical laboratory with maths garbage on what you can see as the bottom of a blackboard? Logic is never an essential in such scenes!

And then at the eleventh hour another super offering from Rod who said *"Herewith a slide rule photo showing the mother of Landsat."* And what a glorious picture and lovely, entertaining and educational tale: <https://go.nasa.gov/4gZAvK9> Highly Recommended!



The caption to the lovely picture is: “Virginia Norwood, the mother of Landsat, in 1963 with slide rule. Norwood’s father gave her her first slide rule at age 9, by the late 1960s she was designing the ground-breaking Multispectral Scanner System (MSS) for the first Landsat satellite. Photo credit: Hughes; used with permission of Virginia Norwood” **Hon Ed:** I notice with some dread she lives near Los Angeles, I trust she remains well and safe from their present horrors; she is 93!

I quote

“I quote” used to be a regular and interesting feature in Skid Stick, providing items found in books and papers that give a view of how slide rules were considered by some authors at that time. This comes from *Supermen, the Seymour Cray story*, page 48 and provides an interesting, if somewhat ironic view of the young Cray at university: “Cray felt more comfortable at the University of Minnesota, though he later complained in tongue-in-cheek fashion that his circular slide rule had given him social problems. As Cray

told it, “real” engineers packed straight slide rules in leather cases that hung from their belts. Because he was unable to wear his circular slide rule in this fashion, he believed that it failed to distinguish him as an engineer”.

And we welcome another new member, A very warm Welcome and it is so good that new members keep joining, Perhaps we are doing something right. A warm welcome Nick Brown!

<p>Nicholas G Brown (Nick)</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">20 The Green Elston Newark NG23 5PF ngb092016@protonmail.ch</p>
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The January UKSRC Zoom meeting

Jerry has provided us with this reminder for the Zoom meeting on the 26th: So, for the UKSRC Zoom call...

Date: Sunday, January 26th, 2025

As for timing, I plan something like:

Morning session: 10 - 12:30

Participants' lunch and informal chat 12:30 - 13:30.

Afternoon session: 13:30 - 16:00.

I would propose that attendees could present a "long talk" (15-20 mins or so), or a "short one" (just a few minutes on some theme - your proposed ("first SR") theme could work well.



I might put something together about the Harwell Dekatron Computer aka The WITCH as described here: <https://www.tnmoc.org/witch> .

"Long talks" could be (but not "must be") accompanied by a paper which could be published in the Gaz. *Hon Ed:* That's a nice idea and should give us a few Gazette articles

It is anticipated that there would be an opportunity for business related presentations and commentary by the Ruling Junta as the first item in the afternoon session. *Hon Ed:* Yes, and we will try and keep it very short and sweet!

The meeting would be held on Zoom, and I propose that participants register by sending a mail to a registration email address to be determined. The Zoom link will be sent out to registered participants a few days ahead.

Jerry then let us know: I have now set up a new email address: jerry.uksrc@gmail.com for the purpose of this meeting, including participant registration and submission of optional papers.

PLEASE DO NOT FORGET TO JOIN US!

Matters Arising



The first bit of 'Matter Arising' is a silly one, and I read the correction while Rod was polishing, but it raises an interesting point: "What's in a Name?" Well, quite a lot it seems! In the last Newsletter I had described this Michael Butterfield device as a Graphometer, (that's what eBay said). Well apparently it is nothing of the sort, (according to the Instruments Group) it is by definition a [cerce hollandais](#), or in English a Holland circle. (A Dutch circle?) The Holland circle consists of four fixed and two rotating sights mounted on an alidade, with a compass in the centre. Also see this [example](#) in the Harvard University Collection of Historical Instruments. Who am I to argue, instead I live and learn, and enjoy such minutiae!

Our first real Matter Arising came from David Riches and requires a "Mea Culpa" from me, as I genuinely thought David only had a very few compasses listed. He says: "*Thanks for another fine Newsletter. however on page 33 you state that there is only a single example of a pocket compass in my collection shown on my website. WRONG!! There is actually a page "Compasses & Clinometers" <http://www.mathsinstruments.me.uk/page105.html> that shows my collection of surveying compasses, hunter cased compasses and military prismatic compasses (some images attached). There are also a couple of examples of compasses combined with map measurers on <http://www.mathsinstruments.me.uk/page71.html>.* *Hon Ed:* an interesting array that I totally missed! Ouch!



F. Barker Verners patt compass MkVII 1; Verner Mk VI 2

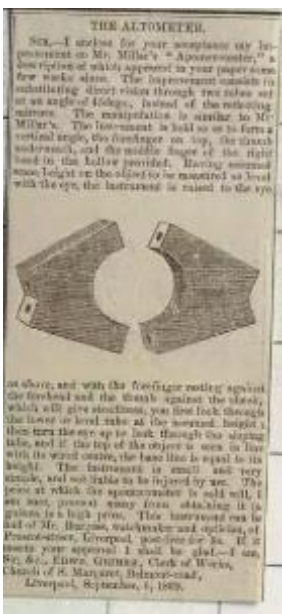


K&E Hunter cased compass2; Casartelli compass 3



M212 Short & Mason Ceebynite compass 2

Hon Ed: While exploring David's page105 with its mouth watering array of Compasses and Clinometers I found yet another new "meter" that I had not previously met: *W F Stanley apomecometer dating from ca. 1900. It has a leather case. Used to determine the height of buildings and trees. One lives and learns, long may it continue!*



A hunt on the internet for more on the apomecometer (here called the Altometer) produced this intriguing snippet from an 1867 Building Magazine for sale on eBay for **1869 Edward Grimes Improvement Of Mr Millers Apomecometer**, this looks as if it could lead down all sorts of entertaining rabbit holes!

Grace's Guide tells us for Miller: 1869 Manufactured the Apomecometer as invented by R. Millar being Irish architect Richard C. Millar, MRIBA. See also <https://www.dia.ie/architects/view/3460/MILLAR-RICHARDCHAYTOR>

Another extensive and really super response came in from Alan Williams, so much enjoyed and really appreciated, many thanks! He says: *"I hope you had an enjoyable Christmas break, with a well-earned rest for the elves. Newsletter 57 was a cracker, so to speak, and kept me well entertained over the festive period. I had considered making a new year's resolution to be more prompt with my responses, but as we are practically midway through January already it seems wiser in retrospect that I abstained, thus sparing myself the indignity of falling before the first hurdle.*

Nevertheless, I have been belatedly spurred into action by the intriguing Blundell Harling printing block that appeared on page 8 of the last edition. It featured the Descal 310 circular calculator alongside one of the firm's masterbow compasses, which is - perhaps surprisingly - reasonably true to scale, this particular Descal being a diminutive device in the flesh (about 7.5 cm/3 inches in diameter). I don't have anything to add about the advertising block itself, nor the compass (at least not without trying the patience of our slide rule brethren), but it did bring to mind some unlikely connections between the Descal and certain other circular calculators.

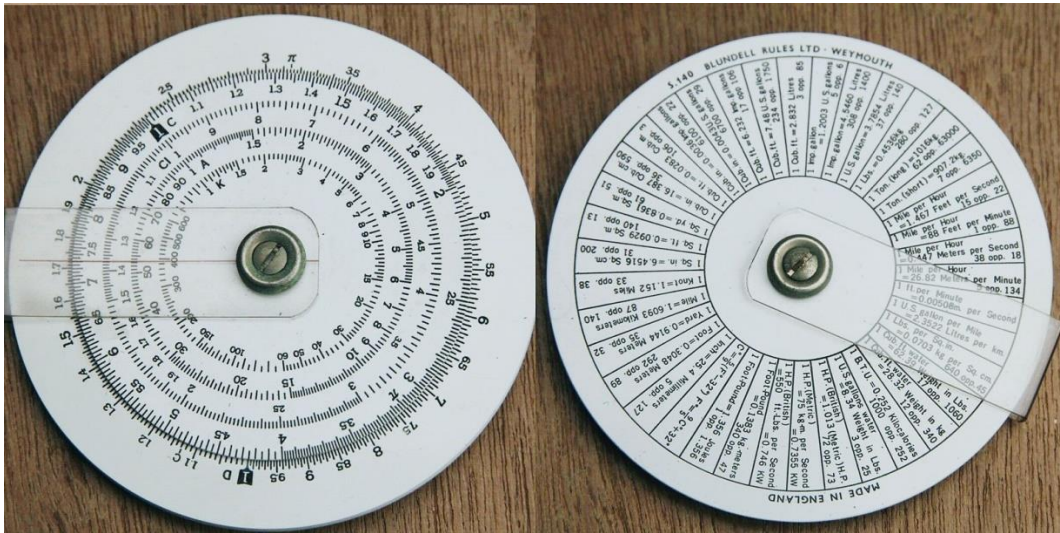


UKSRC Newsletter No 58 January 2025.



The example pictured in the advertisement was one of the last versions of a pocket circular calculator that was first made by Blundell Rules Ltd (i.e. before their merger with WH Harling in the 1960s). It went through several generations with different names, but all featuring essentially the same basic set of scales.

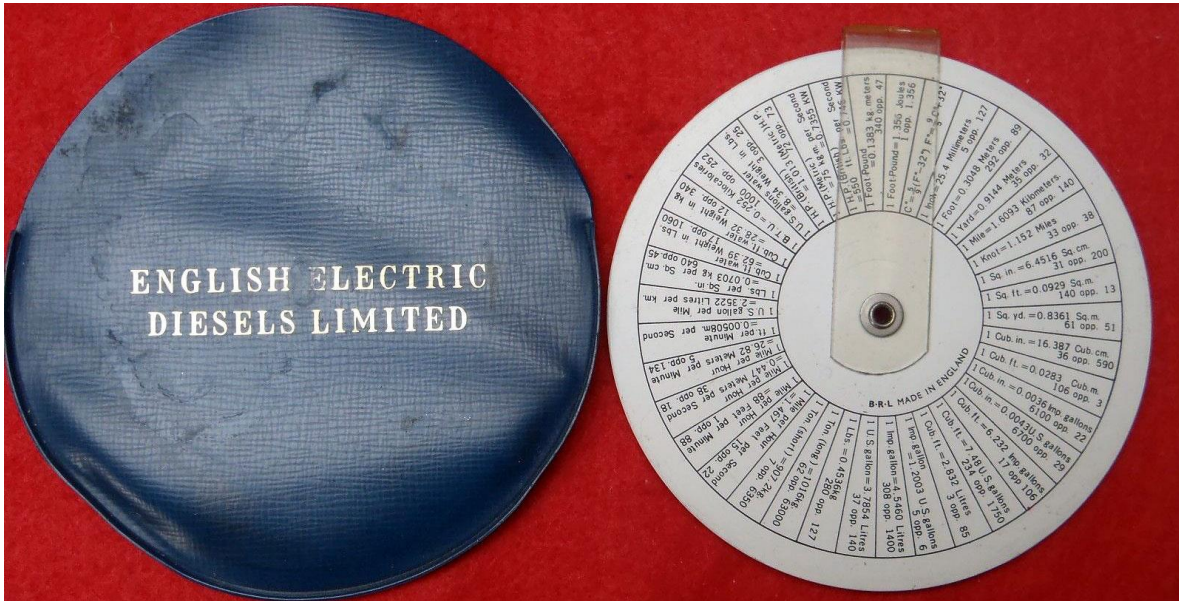
Possibly the earliest of the examples I have found is the S.140, which carries Blundell's Weymouth address, placing it after their move from Luton in 1956. It is made of white PVC sheet material with the scales engraved and filled with black. A simple wraparound celluloid cursor is attached by a screw and washer arrangement, with a single red hairline. The reverse side carries a series of unit conversions with their respective cursor settings, many of which involve British units and their metric or US counterparts. A circular pigskin sleeve with advertising on both sides for the Atlas Preservative Co. Ltd. suggests it was intended as a promotional rule (does the S of its name stand for "special"?). The S series seems to have predated the P numbering system and to have been largely reserved for rules that could be customised as corporate giveaways).



My next specimen, named the Academy 310, shares the same scale sets, wraparound cursor and rear conversion tables, but with a simplified riveted centre. Although the scales have the same arrangement and divisions as the S.140, the numbers have been changed to a more angular typeface (it is worth noting that this is not the case for the conversion tables, which retain the more traditional number forms - the fact that they match those on the front of the S.140 supports the idea that it was the earlier version).

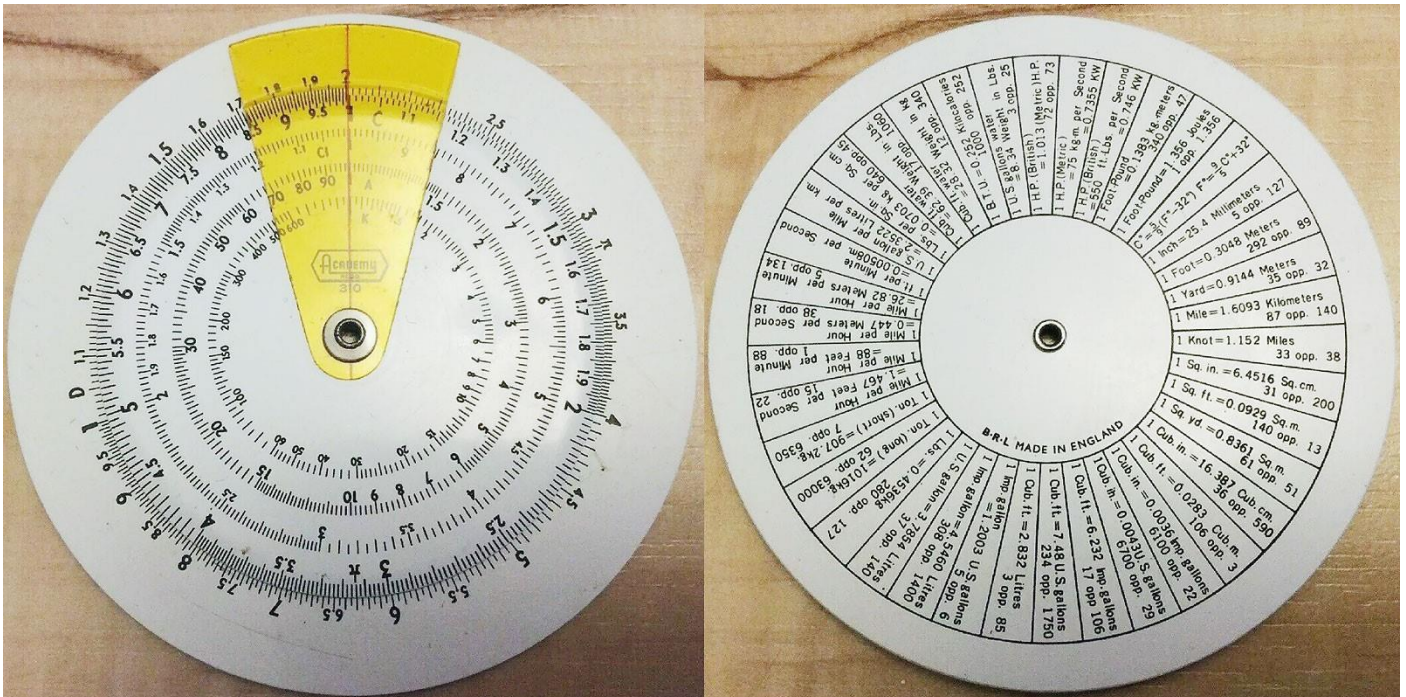


This particular Academy 310 came in a blue plastic sleeve emblazoned with "English Electric Diesels Limited". A bit of



detective work suggests that this particular name was used only from 1968 to 1972, transitioning from the earlier English Electric Diesel Engines to the later GEC Diesels Limited, providing us with a helpfully narrow date range for its production. https://www.gracesguide.co.uk/English_Electric_Diesels

I have a second example of the Academy 310 that is identical in most respects, except for the cursor which is now a single-sided yellow wedge, presumably to fit in with the yellow cursor bands that were used on other Blundell rules of the time (for which the company had taken out a British patent, GB1114917 granted in 1968).



Moving on to the Descal 310 of Martin White's printing block, this was the same pocketable size as the earlier S.140/Academy 310 rules (3 inches in diameter), but had been otherwise completely redesigned. In place of the



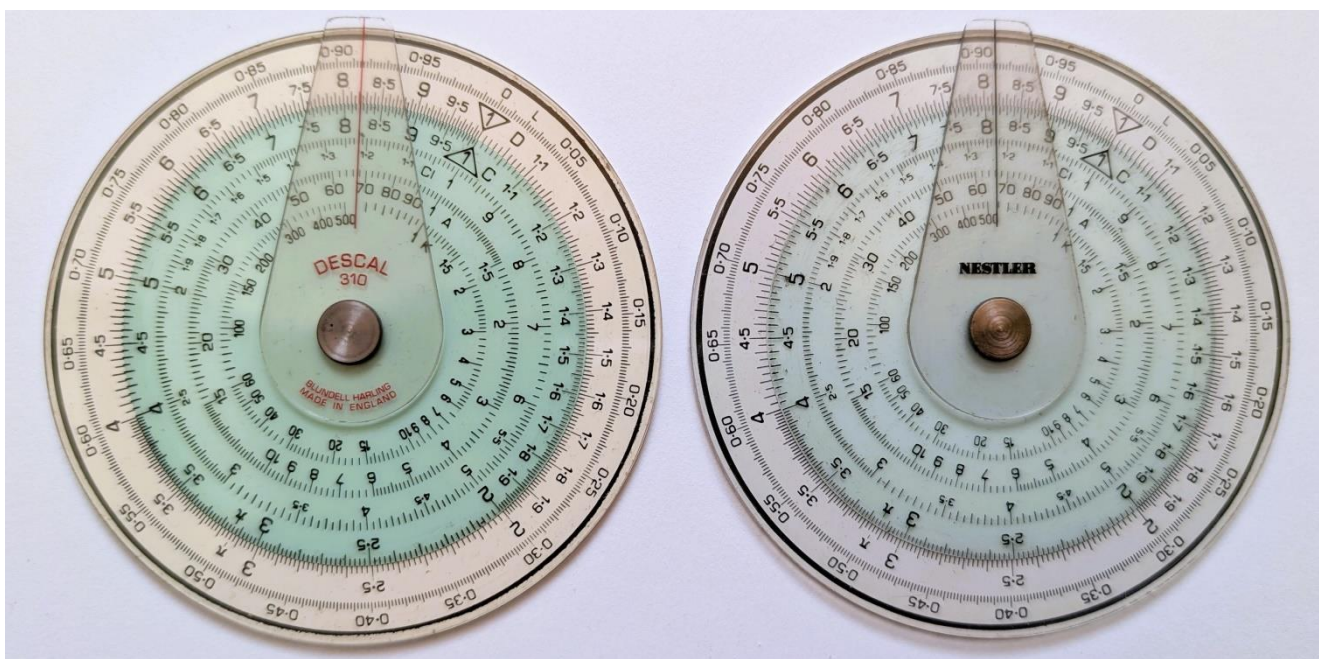
utilitarian rivet is an elegant stainless steel hub, the single-sided cursor is reassuringly sturdy, and an additional L scale now occupies the formerly empty outer edge. Most noticeable of all, the inner moving disc has gone, replaced by a transparent layer with the inner scales printed on its back face (as seen on some Fearn's-Mear circular slide rules, an idea that I believe was first patented and used in Britain by J D Maclean (GB567915 applied for in 1943, granted 1945).

The plain brown plastic sleeve is unmarked and it comes with a tiny book of instructions for models 310 and 314, the latter being a commercial calculator with C/D scales and a percentage scale only. This suggests that the later Descal was intended for general sale, not primarily as a promotional item. Blundell Harling also produced Descal models 315 (log-log) and 316 (commercial), but these were much larger devices - almost eight inches across - that dropped the reverse-printed transparent layer for a flush inner disc with a thick transparent cursor on top. Everything was secured in place by a slotted nut (similar to those found on Fearn's circular slide rules) and a prominent grey plastic wraparound edge rim. These were definitely not pocketable calculators - one might be forgiven for thinking that Blundell Harling wanted to put the "Desk" back into Descal.

That might appear to wrap up Blundell's involvement with circular slide rules which, as mentioned in the last newsletter, were one of their less usual devices. However, the sharp-eyed reader may have noticed some similarities to a couple of other calculating discs, albeit not ones with an obvious British connection.

Exhibit one is something of an oddity in itself, a circular slide rule from the renowned German slide rule pioneer Nestler. As David Rance noted in his article *Squaring the Circle: Overlooked Nestler Models* (UKSRC Gazette 19), "Nestler sold circular models but never considered them as part of their retail slide rule product range. This is why no circular model was ever listed in any Nestler catalogue." Apart from the Nestler logo, mine lacks any other information about its model number or place of manufacture, but according to David's article it is an example of their RP 75 Rietz-like model (75 referring to its diameter of 75 mm).

There is, however, something strangely familiar about this dinky calculator, as a side-by-side comparison with the Descal 310 makes abundantly clear. Branding aside, the two devices are the same in almost every respect, the black cursor hairline of the Nestler being the only significant variation. While the Blundell Harling is marked "Made in England", the Nestler remains suspiciously silent about its origins. Even so, there can be little doubt that it was made





for Nestler by Blundell Harling. I even wonder if the mint green inner circle of the Descal was a consequence of Blundell streamlining their production line to accommodate their German customer's signature colour.

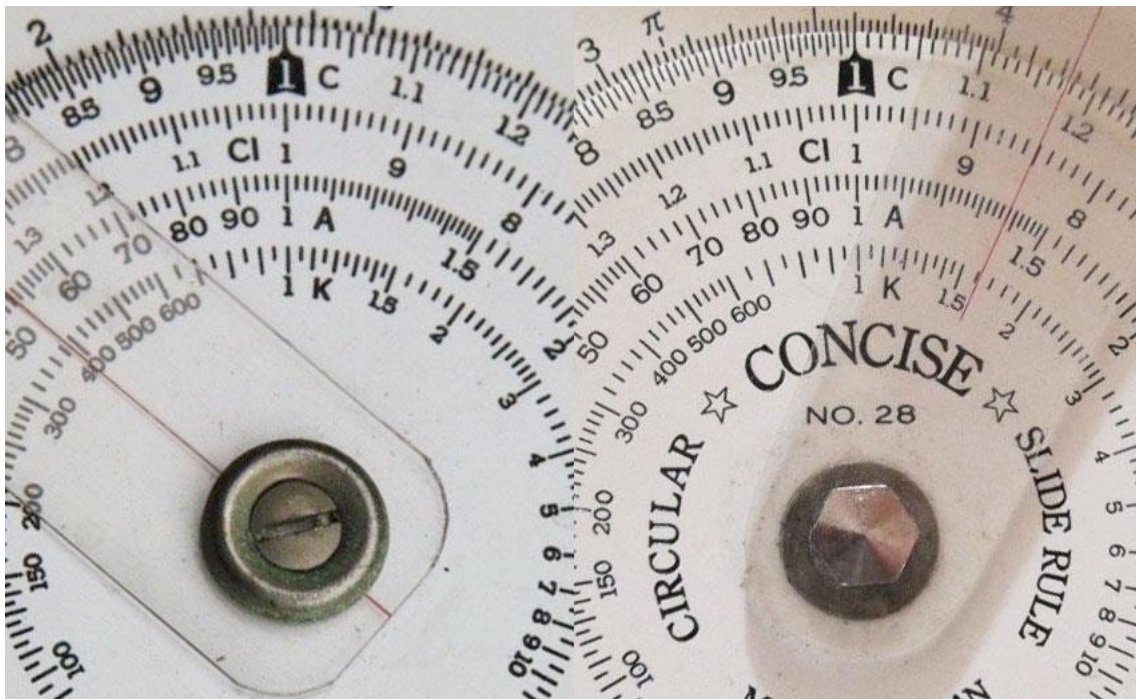
Having made this unexpected discovery, I took a second look at my other circular slide rules, which brings us to exhibit two: the ubiquitous Concise No. 28. Possibly the most well-known and mass-produced circular slide rule of all time, this Japanese classic is still in production today.

https://www.concise.co.jp/fs/concise/slide_rule/100973

It had never occurred to me that the Concise rules were anything but Japanese, nor do I recall ever seeing one that was not marked "Made in Japan". Yet the scales of the 28 are a virtual clone of Blundell's earlier S.140, right down to the slab-serif typeface used for the numbers (possibly Rockwell, released by Monotype in 1934) and the characteristic "shield" pointers around the 1 marks on C and D. Nor do the similarities stop there. On the back is an identical conversion table, complete with niche British units (B.T.U.s anyone?) yet marked "Made in Japan" in the centre. The wraparound cursor and central nut/washer, while similar in concept, are different enough in design to dispel any thoughts of this being a rebadged Blundell product. Likewise, the S.140 is clearly not an imported Japanese rule, being unambiguously marked "Made in England" on the back.

It therefore seems likely that the Concise was either a licensed version of Blundell's design manufactured in Japan, or a shamelessly copied knock-off. Ironically, the Concise model even made it back to the UK as a Dargue Bros. branded version, which seems to be more common than the original Blundell.

<http://tinassliderules.me.uk/Slide%20Rules/Concise%20Dargue.JPG>



I'm sure there is more to the Concise story than I have managed to discover so far. The company is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year, and the No. 28 dates back to at least the 1960s (see https://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/object/nmah_1190132), but firm dates seem difficult to pin down. Maybe the



newsletter readership will be able to help. **Hon Ed:** /Yes please can anyone help, Concise in their various dates please and there is a Cyril Catt Concise article in Gaz 19 see <https://tinyurl.com/2snxztfm> which I shall have to look at and in Gaz 20, I thin as well, but I can't remember.

Attached are a few photos of my Blundells described above - I have not had a chance to photograph most of them, so I have dug out the original auction photos instead. Fortunately the Descal 310 and Nestler were close to hand, so I took a quick phone snap of them together. **Hon Ed:** I have tried slotting them into the narrative.

At some point I will send you something about the clothoid curves (aka Cornu/Euler/transition curves) from p. 24, but that requires even more digging! **Hon Ed:** Oh Yes please!

DIY Fowler – or A One-off Fowler Special?



A sort of Matter Arising, the delightful Modified Fowler is now in my collection, and with the Xmas mails in the dreadful state they are in, I have no idea when it will arrive, hopefully before this Newsletter makes its way through Elves and the Page's ministrations! Watch this space!

Later: The device has arrived and has raised more questions than it provided answers for! I am now pretty certain that what I have purchased is a pretty unusual calculator made by Fowler in its later years as a special for Laporte Industries, and not as appeared the case, a hand made modification to a standard calculator from their existing range. Let us look at the evidence:



1. It is definitely a 4.5" diameter Fowler later type sintered metal case as would have been used for the Magnum, Long Scale Magnum, and Nautical calculators, and not the smaller Universal, 12-10 or Type B devices.
2. It had been modified to remove the right-most (from the front) crown which would normally operate the rotating cursor. (This makes sense as the new "cover" with its cut out and Captions would have interfered with the cursor mechanism.)



All so far evidence that was available from the images accompanying the original sale.



3. Taking the chromed steel back off the calculator (left) shows the lack of crown, axle and gear that would normally drive the cursor via the centre hole, and also shows the cast metal framework which carries the remaining mechanism for rotating the scale glued onto its usual geared brass plate. This could have been done "at home" or in the factory, but the scale on its plate, and the cover with its cut-out can only be accessed from the front before the lens with its red engraved cursor line is inserted into the case, something I have never been able to undo!

4. So what scale has been used? Both Alan and I speculated but without conclusion. So it turns out this is a special scale as they are not continuous scales (see right) as on most Fowler calculators.



5. Either side of the hairline is start and finish values of that particular scale.
 6. This leads me to think that they have to have been professionally done rather than a home modification. I will list the scales with their limits later, but further exploration also shows a strange set of modifications within the printed scales.
 7. The fourth from the bottom scale includes these tiny numbers within what was previously printed on the scale – a late modification to what might have been supplied to Fowler for printing and fitting?

8. The scales from the top downwards with [R] or [L] for right or left marking on cover cut-out:

H ₂ O ₂ CONC ^N WT% (A) [R]	:0 TO 100
H ₂ O ₂ CONC ^N GPL AT 20°C[L]	:0 TO 100
MOL.FRACTION H ₂ O ₂ [R]	:0 TO 1450
DENSITY G/CC AT 20°C[L]	:0 TO 1.00
REFRACTIVE INDEXAT25°C [R]	:1.00 TO 1.44
FREEZING PT IN °C [L]	:1.335 TO 1.405
LIQ.WT%IN EQM WITH VAP [R]	:0, -5, -10 .. -40, -50, TO 0 (WITH TINY MODS BETWEEN -40 AND -50)
(SCALE A) 50 MMHG [R]	
VAP WT%INEQ ^M WITH LIQ [L]	: 0 TO 100
(SCALE A) 50 MMHG [L]	
BOIILING PT AT 50 MMHG IN °C [R]	: 38.2 TO 80

Note: I have attempted to describe the scales as accurately as I can but some scales appear to have alternative uses depending on which end they are read from, but they are understandable from my ‘A’ level chemistry ages ago; they enable conversions between scales, not true calculations.

Counter intuitively the scale and its cover with cut-out look to be professionally printed and then cut out. The flat portion at the bottom makes them look very amateurish but may be a marker for “base”, to enable correct placement, because as fitted the remaining crown is on the right at about 2 o-clock for perfect alignment to the right hand when reading the scales with cut out at 12 o-clock. Easy to use.

Laporte Chemicals were in existence from 1948/49 through to 1975 which is contemporaneous with the period Fowler made these later sintered aluminium cased calculators when they were called Fowler (Calculators) Ltd Sale from 1942 to 1988; the Jim Cookson period post Harold Fowler. Interestingly, I have been unable to find even a single picture of Cookson or indeed any information about him, but he ran Fowlers (Calculators) Ltd from 1942 when Harold died through to 1988 when Cookson too retired and the company finally closed.

Conclusion: To my mind, all the evidence points to this having been made by Fowler for Laporte and therefore something most unusual and once again a first. I know of no other similar examples. Therefore how many others might there be out there? If anyone can find an example of a “standard” non contiguous scale as used on this I would probably change my mind, but in all my examples I have only been able to find continuous scales. The fact that the lens is firmly



and neatly fitted into the case, with absolutely no signs of having been removed and replaced also makes me think “factory”! I am more than happy to debate this; it makes it so much more interesting!

Correspondence with the seller elicited that this had come from a house clearance somewhere in Northumberland (where the seller lives) - “a couple of years ago”. Not much help at all. Anyway, to my mind I have a new and previously unknown perfectly kosher unusual Fowler calculator!

An interesting conundrum or an interesting example of International trade?

My interest in stop watches mean that I regularly trawl eBay for these and so it happened that I found item [395918763980](#) advertised as a **VERY RARE used example of a WW1 German Imperial Navy Kaiserliche Marine Torpedo Timer Stop Watch!** With a silly money start price of \$1,999.99. It will be interesting to watch and again I have had an offer for a drop of \$500. Still totally silly money for what would be a whim!



I have not been able to work out what the various pushers (top and bottom), the crown, and pointers (left side) achieve but a Serial Number of 740 and a date of 1918 make this an interesting item in terms of early submarine warfare.

It was not many days later that I spotted eBay item [395932100646](#) advertised this time as a **VERY RARE used example of a WW2 Imperial Japanese Navy Torpedo Timing Stop Watch!** The **AMAZING** feature, is that this was **originally in use by the WW1 German Imperial Navy Kaiserliche Marine.** With a perhaps more sensible start price of \$799.99, but this may not even be working – it has no crown.





Anyway this has a serial number of 606 (I think) and date of 1918, it needs the explanation from the seller (the same as the previous one) to make any sense at all:



Produced for the German Navy, these stop watches were used for the measurement of torpedo running times and depth charge detonation. Early in WW2, The Japanese acquired timers and stop watches from various Swiss and German producers, as the movements were far superior to their own. As the war progressed, Seikosha (left, item [355941796161](#) for an unusual and different example for sale at \$419.99) became the main producer, as the German and Swiss movements were difficult to obtain.

Made of brass with a nickel/chrome plating, this Swiss-made Torpedo Timer Stop Watch is in EXCELLENT functioning condition! Though the crystal shows some very light scratches, and there is NO corrosion. Produced in 1918, there are no manufacture markings. This originally had an Imperial German Navy Crown and "M" (Kaiserliche Marine) stamped into the back, however the Crown was buffed out, and a Japanese Naval Anchor added below. Being in used condition, the case does show some signs of wear (scratches, marks, patina), but it is in otherwise GOOD condition for its age. Sadly, it is not currently functional, and it is missing the winding crown and stem. There is also a small crack on the dial. Probably just good for display. A VERY RARE and UNIQUE piece of history, and would make for a EXCELLENT addition to any collection, or display!

Hon Ed: Would I pay over \$800 for something to simply display --- No!

A beautiful SimplexPlanimeter

An eBay item that sold almost as soon as it appeared - **SIMPLEX PLANIMETER. By Lippincott S. S. & S. Co. Pat. 1901. Newark, N.J. W/ BOX** is something we have looked at previously for the delightfully simple design and the use of a fan of card scales instead of built-in scales as on other Lippincott designs. And what a beautifully lined box!



It reminded me to check through Dave Green's excellent web site:

<https://www.uraone.com/PlanimeterVault/willis/>

Dave notes that Lippincott removed the scale normally found on planimeters of the day to make a simple and cheap offering, hence 'Simplex'.

There were two versions of this tool, a \$10 version, with velvet lining and boxwood scales, and a \$7.50 version with a cheaper lining and fibre scales.

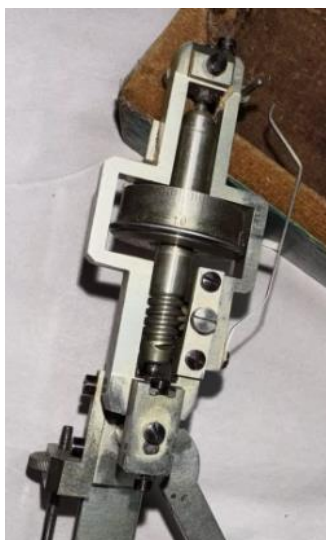
The present version is the \$7.50 offering.

Another un-named, unusual planimeter

Good old eBay has yet another quite different Amsler-like planimeter which shows no makers name nor type number and includes an unusual pair of brake levers.

eBay item [116431736509](#) which sold pretty quickly for \$100 described as “antique Planimeter. Possibly Amsler German, but cannot confirm. Couldn't locate manufacturer anywhere on it.” Except that it had unusual girder like legs, a straight “handle” as well as the much less usual brake handle on the bottom looking down on it and the lever brake on the top at the back – and no serial number.

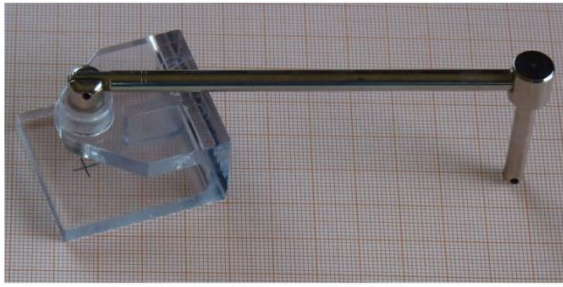




eBay has a particularly rich vein of Amsler type planimeters in the immediate past few weeks including Amsler type 4 serial 2592 under eBay item number [135483890235](https://www.ebay.com/itm/135483890235). Funny how they come in batches, but this werdie is quite different.

Another interesting Planimeter with a Query!

Our friend David Green courtesy of the Instruments Group, has shown a most interesting and quite sophisticated Hatchett planimeter by an unknown maker DINA. A really delightful device:



PLANIMETER

Das Flächenmeßgerät errechnet blitzschnell den Flächeninhalt von Grundrissen, Querschnitten, Zuschnitten usw. Unentbehrlich für Kalkulatoren, Architekten, Konstrukteure, Landmesser und Techniker. Unterrichtsmittel für Schulen.



Vom ungefähren Mittelpunkt (M) der zu messenden Fläche wird eine Hilfslinie (H) zum Außenrand (A) gezogen. Nachdem das Fadenkreuz im Sockel des PLANIMETERS auf Punkt M gebracht ist, wird durch einen leichten Druck auf den Laufkolben (L) durch das Rädchen die Unterlage markiert (X). (Die Markierung kann deutlicher gemacht werden, wenn das Rädchen vorher auf einem Stempelkissen leicht angetuscht wird.) Das Fadenkreuz wird von M nach A und dann nach rechts oder links über die Außenlinie der Fläche nach A und weiter nach M zurückgeführt. Der neue Radstand wird wiederum durch den Druck auf den Laufkolben markiert. Der Abstand von X zu Y zeigt in mm den Inhalt in cm² an.

Dave, and others in the Group, have so far been unable to cast any light on DINA other than recognising that 'Circle R' tells us that it is a Registered mark we think from Germany.

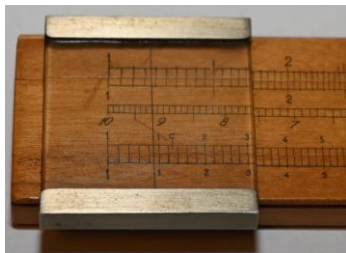
In use the planimer is typically similar in action to less sophisticated Hatchett planimeters, a translation of the instructions is: "From the center point (M) of the area to be measured, an auxiliary line (H) is drawn to the outer edge (W). After the crosshairs in the base of the PLANIMETER have been brought to point M, the base is marked (X) by lightly pressing on the piston (L) through the wheel. The marking can be made clearer if the wheel is first lightly touched on a slab (!). The crosshairs are moved from M to A and then right or left over the outer edge of the area to A and then back to M. The new wheel base is again marked by pressing on the piston. The distance from X to Y in mm, is the volume (area?) in cu cm."

So who are DINA – I have found nothing!



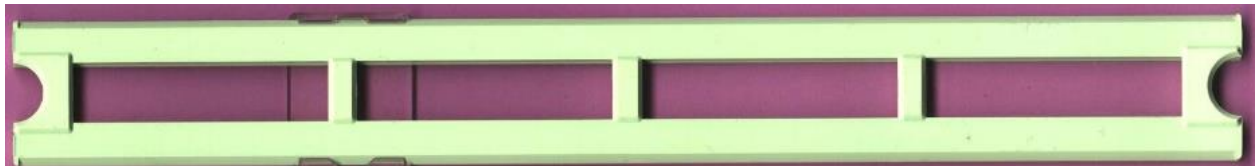
A most uninteresting slide rule!

The slide rule group has spent a quite incredible amount of effort discussing a slide rule, that, on the face of it, is remarkably uninteresting, shown here below:



This rather nicely made all-wooden "Reitz" A/B,CI,C/D no L or Trig scales slide rule marked simply "*Teknologisk Institut København*" on the bottom right hand front, has not been identified by maker or date, and to me is interesting only for the very unusual and rather nice "Girder" back which looks remarkably like a more elegant form of an American

plastic Sterling slide rule: From the ISRM we have :



Or maybe the metal back of a Richardson military design, but there is nothing to confirm this.





Whatever, the panoply of Scandinavian manufacturers in the ISRM Nordic gallery fail to show anything appropriate <https://sliderulemuseum.com/Nordic.shtml>

I do not believe it is made from any form of ply, and whatever the wood, it is a most elegant “One-off”!
I am hoping that by seeing all the pictures on one page, it might lead to inspiration and someone recognising the maker of this delightful elegant wooden slide rule.

A set of all-metal Drawing Curves

The pre-Xmas selection of items on eBay is particularly rich in unusual items! E-eBay item **267103097265** advertised as **40 Piece Set of Metal Radius Templates Curve Degree Curvature Set Vintage 1945** is not something I have seen before and does not appear to have any identifying makers information



The details describing the item is not particularly helpful: “40 piece set of metal curve templates. Found these in the old man's shed and they need a cleaning. Besides the 1 to 40 numerical stamps there is a logo in the center that says Patterns, Copyright 1945 and the number 37083. I have no clue what these are for. They range in length from 9" to 36" long. Does this help anyone in any way? They do not appear to have been in any sort of box. Buy-It-Now a perhaps slightly optimistic \$99.95. Let us see whether they sell!

Another device I know not what it is or how to use!

eBay item [116424032943](#) (complete with 24 pictures) is advertised as a **Vintage Casella London Draught Gauge Instrument Scientific Draft Gage Tool Used** is an item I am finding great difficulty understanding what it is used for and how it might be used!





I'm pretty sure its not windy-poos under doors, nor the draught of ships, but beyond that I am pretty much in the dark. The internet shows there is an instruction booklet and various articles which look totally relevant but do not actually give the information! Can anyone help please?



Another what is it?

This is perhaps even more difficult - I have absolutely no idea nor clues, and neither does the seller! But it is truly intriguing.

eBay item [156546660457](https://www.ebay.com/itm/156546660457) which carries the really helpful title **antique vintage scientific instruments**, actually give us a clue that it is French by having Bte S.G.D.G on one of the catches (r). One of the 8 pictures at left, splendid box.



Buy-It-Now price £50, and I've received an offer for £45, but am still none the wiser!

And yet another What on Earth is it for?



Spotted this device (and several others with exactly the same gubbins on the left of the watch) on an eBay site which gives absolutely no clues as what the “mechanism on the left is for, anyone any ideas? See <https://www.ebay.com/itm/145542084424>

I would need heavy physio before I could wear such a watch, that's quite a lump!

And then yet another what is it?



Courtesy of Dean we have a device whose use is not obvious, and the picture of an eBay item whose condition is pretty awful, labelled “Antique Calculator , Calculating instrument tool, Arithmetic, Maths, Mathematics “ (not an awful lot of help! - Dean writes: “*Any idea what this is, I suspect green or red celluloid “window” should be somehow involved*”. But I do not understand what this is.

Rod did a reverse image search and writes: “*Tried the usual reverse image facilities: Google, Bing, Yandex etc., and got nowhere. One of them said it was a TI3500 which was absolute nonsense. The numbers on the device are very strange.*”

I have a feeling it is a “Chain Calculator or Adder” and found a You-Tube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1k88d-PNZYA> which is absolutely fine for the **mechanism of the Add-O-Matic Adding Machine**. Which I don't think this actually is, but it is the right type of device. We have looked at a Hertzstark chain adder previously, see Newsletter 48 page 40.



A look at Jaap’s Mechanical Calculator page (for instance) <https://www.jaapsch.net/mechcalc/seidelnaumann.htm> shoes a considerable number of designs, but not this actual one or even anything similar.



I find it very frustrating that nothing similar has turned up, a 12 column adding machine is not to be sniffed at and this, even if it was only part of something is quite impressive. A fairly comprehensive search on t’internet has failed to identify this particulart device – can anyone help please?

Having found absolutely nothing relevant, I had a careful hunt on eBay for the device, and item <https://www.ebay.com/itm/375750729008> which gave better pictures that added to the confusion with the actual coloured “numbers” now becoming obvious.

The first row of X21 222 222 222, and the next of X1X 111 122 1XX is obviously some sort of series but the odd colurs and the fading do not help work out what it might be. A Google search using the first row also leads into uncharted territory!

Dean’s Bryden-Hodgson slide rule

Two things give me particular pleasure, first, finding a previously mentioned but otherwise unknown slide rule, and secondly finding a picture of the inventor, especially if it includes a picture of the slide rule with its inventor!

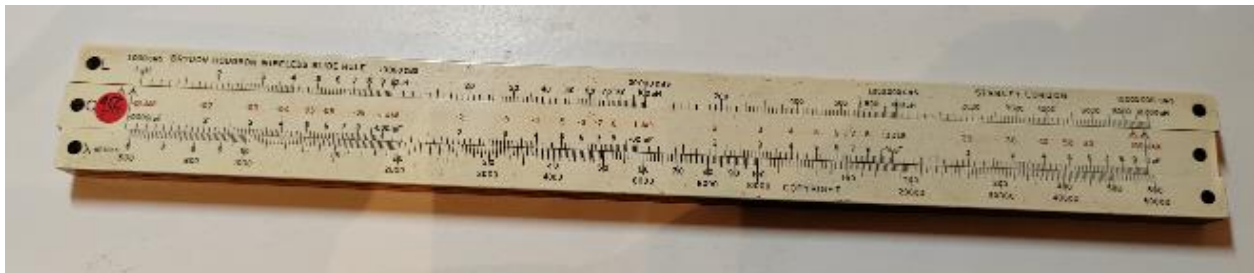
Dean writes: Brydon Hodgson Wireless Slide Rule, Stanley London.

From OS monograph number 2, Richard Smith Hughes:

"The first of the Electronic slide rules were probably those designed to solve for the transmitted frequency of wireless spark gap telegraphy (Morse code), Figure 6. Thanks to Peter Hopp, I know of three slide rules (Peter Hopp sent me catalog scans of these slide rules; no actual examples are known), all with decimal point independent scales, see Figure 7. They were probably designed and manufactured in the mid 1920’s. The three spark gap slide rules are discussed in Appendix A for those interested."

Note Smith did not know of any of these extant — now we know of one.

Here we have the picture of the Bryden-Hodgson wireless slide rule, and what is particulary nice is that it looks just like the device in the various Richard Smith Hughes articles!



Have a look at <https://tinyurl.com/yc2d76hw> for the Gazette 11 version of Richard’s article which includes all three wireless slide rules.



Beautiful Pocket-watch slide rules



I was truly delighted to receive a fascinating document from Hans Kordetzky in Switzerland with this delightful true pocket-watch slide rule that I had previously encountered and am chuffed that the single example I was previously aware of (now in the USA) actually also has a second example in the Beyer watch museum in Zurich.

<https://www.beyer-ch.com/en/clock-and-watch-museum/>

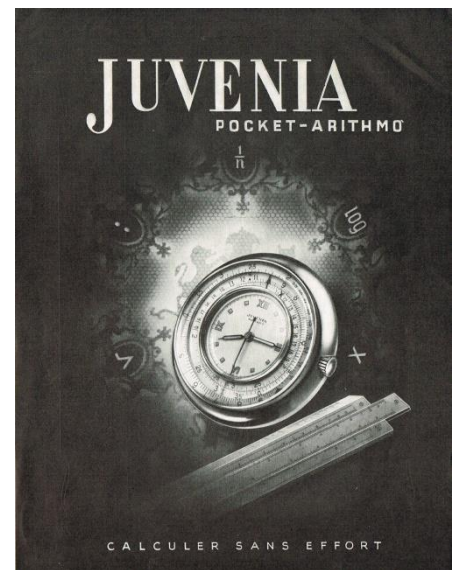
and <https://tinyurl.com/5tpafhhy>

It is truly a delight to receive items like this out of the blue, and this device is definitely one of the most covetable devices I have in my most remote ever wish list.



Juvenia has a new page in the not yet published Second edition of my *Pocket-watch Slide Rules* book.

For completeness I also show a second similar device from Homis, presently on German eBay which is similarly intended for the second edition. It always surprises me when something interesting pops up so randomly and coincidentally!





This particular thread bore further instant fruit when Hans then sent me information on yet another Juvenia Pocket-watch slide rule which I was aware of but only as a wrist watch. However, I had previously seen a 1947 advert for the device but had not believed that it truly existed. I should have known better! The equivalent of a loop for hanging on a watch chain is not obvious on either the example or indeed the advert.

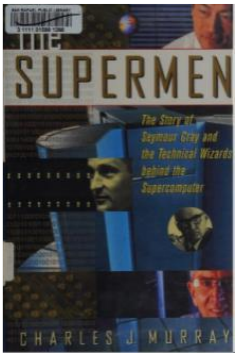


So now for completeness I include a pictures of a Meyrat & Perdrizet pocket watch slide rule, the original, and at the time of publication of [*“Pocket-watch Slide Rules”*](#) (2011), the only true pocket watch inclusive slide rule design, The original design and patent dates from about 1880 which is considerably older than the more modern examples that are our more recent discoveries. There are a surprising number of M&P examples known with several variants, apart from the version that does not include a pocket-watch movement.

Note yet another new variant with a tiny seconds dial on the watch, serial 222; here below and then a Gold cased example, serial unknown, without any second hand. Heaven knows how much that went for! And finally one with a sweep second hand. The full range of watch versions.



Good Reads!



The Supermen, The Story of Seymour Cray and the Technical Wizards behind the Supercomputer, by Charles Murray 1st edn ©1997 John Wiley. An extremely kind fairy with an

apparently inexhaustible electronic library, let me have a copy of Cray's story which I have been enjoying reading over the fester season! Thank you so much! Cray and his engineers make for interesting reading. They were in interesting times and they were right at the forefront of technology, and Seymour Cray was quite a guy, a genuine genius, and one hell of an inspirational leader. It is really quite difficult to lift oneself into the

Supercomputer world when ones own experiences were those of very normal, albeit early computers. The quite unique and idiosyncratic 160 MFLOPS Cray 1 (1975) is shown here right, and when he died they were bandying round figures of one terraflop¹ for performance of the Cray 4. (1994) They subsequently have produced several peta flop devices. Quite mind blowing, and a great read!



A couple of topics where there are really interesting discourses, both courtesy of the [Slide Rule Group](#):

Slide rule precision or accuracy : see <https://followingtherules.info/the-long-and-short-of-it.html#the-long-and-short-of-it> includes a bit of maths which makes a nice change, and we have had forays into Mike Syphers glorious site previously.

Scanning and Scanners: The following is a fascinating discourse on alternative methods of producing pictures of detail on rules as well as the different types of scanner lenses available, see first <https://www.savazzi.net/photography/scanner-lenses.html> Highly entertaining and educational and recommended!

Meper (topic 4003) also mentions yet another site: www.closeupphotography.com

¹ I'm not saying how many times greater due to different Mega, Terra and Peta in UK v USA!



In between times, everybody knows of my extreme dislike of scammers and the like, so it was with considerable pleasure that Rod introduced me to the personage of Daisy; see the following and enjoy an unexpectedly beneficial fruit of AI: Rod wrote: “I met Daisy. She's been around for a month or more so you might have seen here”.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RV_SdCfZ-0s and <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/vkXK2uU-coM>



Hidden Figures – the book and the film. The film, particularly a couple of the “extras” was very watchable, but I must confess I found the book (just recently finished) quite difficult reading. My modern self found it incredibly hard to relate to some Virginia USA politician declaring that “he would be quite happy for his children to die in ignorance than have to share a school with negroes” at the time Virginia were steadfastly refusing to have shared schools, and had closed their senior schools. You can only salute the good black lady “computers” in NASA, and the incredible contribution they made to the early American Space Programme. Quite inspirational.

And then finally a fascinatingly awful video courtesy of MOGS advertising careers in the RAF: <https://youtu.be/TaW6XESZgi4?si=c9BigKmWUamdRLt> 20 odd minutes of “fun”!

A Gentleman’s Necessaire



With thanks to the Instruments Group, I pinched this screen shot of the insides of a Gentleman’s Etui (French c1750) and its unusual contents, which apart from its usual collection of drawing instruments, also included a sector (rather nice!) but also a knife and fork (perhaps typically French?), so that apart from being able to measure and draw your eating requisites, you could also partake of them once they had been served! There is also reference to an Instagram “Reel” (film) which shows how they all fit into the rather fine Etui, see <https://www.instagram.com/p/DERoGzZssf/>

From the rather interesting site of Grace Horne Designs on Instagram. She is a UK based scissors maker and cutlery historian. (interesting combination!) and this little lot is very different and entertaining!



Another Interesting Query

The Greene Computer Money circular Slide Rule Calculator & Case Margate Kent, came from someone who contacted the UKSRC via Dave Nichols: which resulted in Stephen finding a result:



And a Worthpoint description as follows:

This listing is for a Very Rare "The Greene Calculator" manufactured by London Name Plate Manufacturing Co Limited in the Zylow Works Brighton England. The Main body is manufactured from two Aluminium circular panels printed and riveted together with perspex slider pivoting on large button head rivet in the middle. Manufactured before 1971 and displaying old pounds, shillings and pennies. The Circular Calculator measures 8 inches or 203mm in diameter, and comes with original case with age related appearance.

Hon Ed:

I also believed I had seen the device and sure enough it was in Skid Stick.



<https://sliderules.lovett.com/cookie/dev/extendeddisplayarticle.cgi?match=Skid%20Stick%20No.%2045%20October%202013%20%20Pg.%2014>

And then sure enough there was a follow-up in SS46:

<https://sliderules.lovett.com/cookie/dev/extendeddisplayarticle.cgi?match=Skid%20Stick%20No.%2046%20February%202014%20%20Pg.%202>

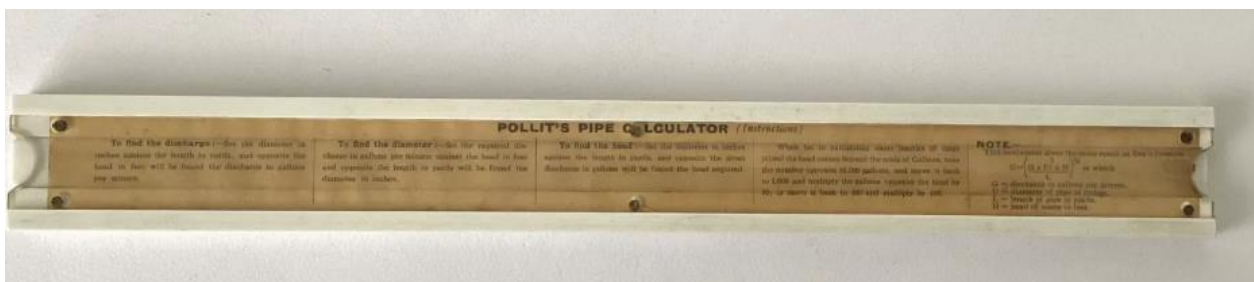


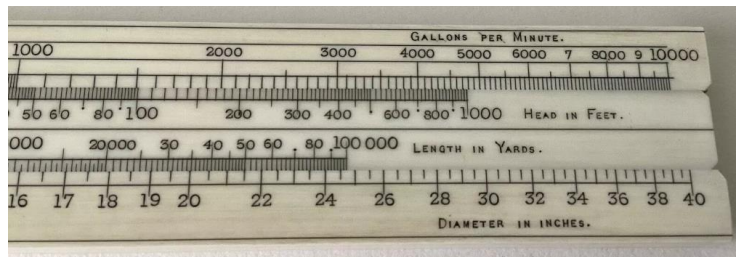
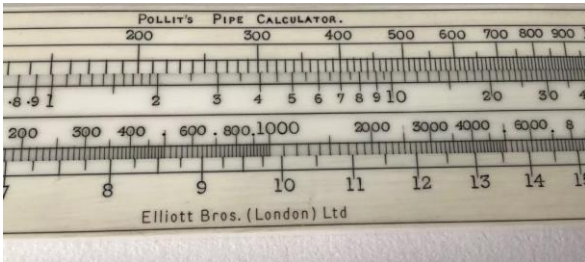
and Colin had one - heaven knows where that went, but I also believe that Bruce Williams might have had one, way back when!

There was a penchant for weird "Business" slide rules. I remember Bruce had a lulu by Mazawhatee Tea (I think that was how it was spelled) and I have ""The Times" Yield Calculations" which I have never been able to date but has a 4-spiral columnar scale labelled New Pence there for probably mid 1970's after decimalisation.

Pollitts Pipe Calculator

This most unusual device, a plastic slide rule in most unusual format by Elliott Bros was discovered during one of my ambles through eBay. eBay item <https://www.ebay.com/itm/326162616309>





The eBay item has 9 pictures, I have selected case front and reverse and some scales, and is described as:

RARE VINTAGE POLLITS PIPE CALCULATOR MADE BY ELLIOT BROS LONDON LTD.

34 CM IN LENGTH AND 4 CM IN WIDTH APPROXIMATELY.

ORIGINAL CASE THAT HAS SOME RESTORATION.

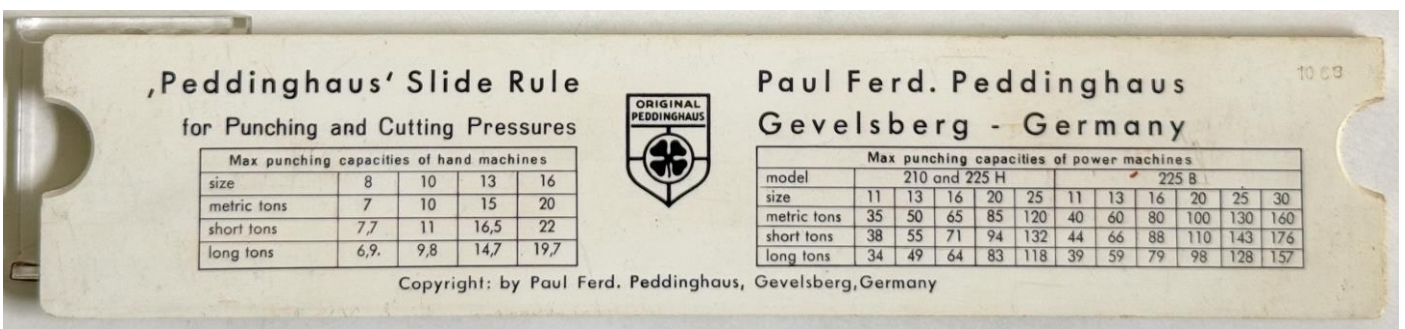
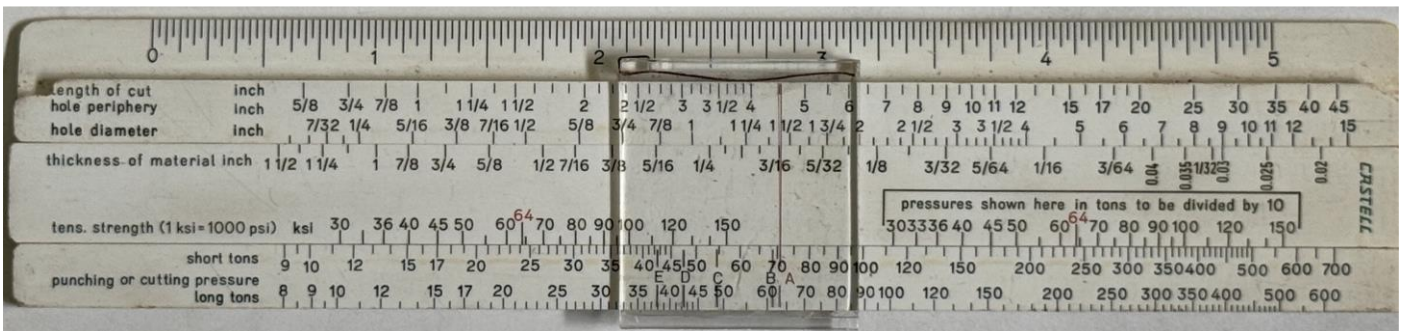
PERFECT UNDAMAGED CONDITION. Elsewhere it is described as Bakelite, I don't believe it.

Delightful and most unusual slide rule with a tatty case!

Another very different Castell slide rule

With many thanks to Cyril Catt in the antipodes, he tells us of an Xmas Gift: "A CASTELL slide rule dated 10.68 made for Paul Ferd. Peddinghaus of Gevelsberg, Germany, presumably for clients in the USA using the company's metal fabrication tools. Photos attached. (see here below).

The cursor has a red hairline, labelled 'A', offset to the right. Other, black, hairlines, labelled B, C, D, and E, covering only the two bottom scales on the stock, are placed at narrowing intervals to the left of 'A'. These presumably relate to the relevant diagrams in the channel of the stock, behind the slide.



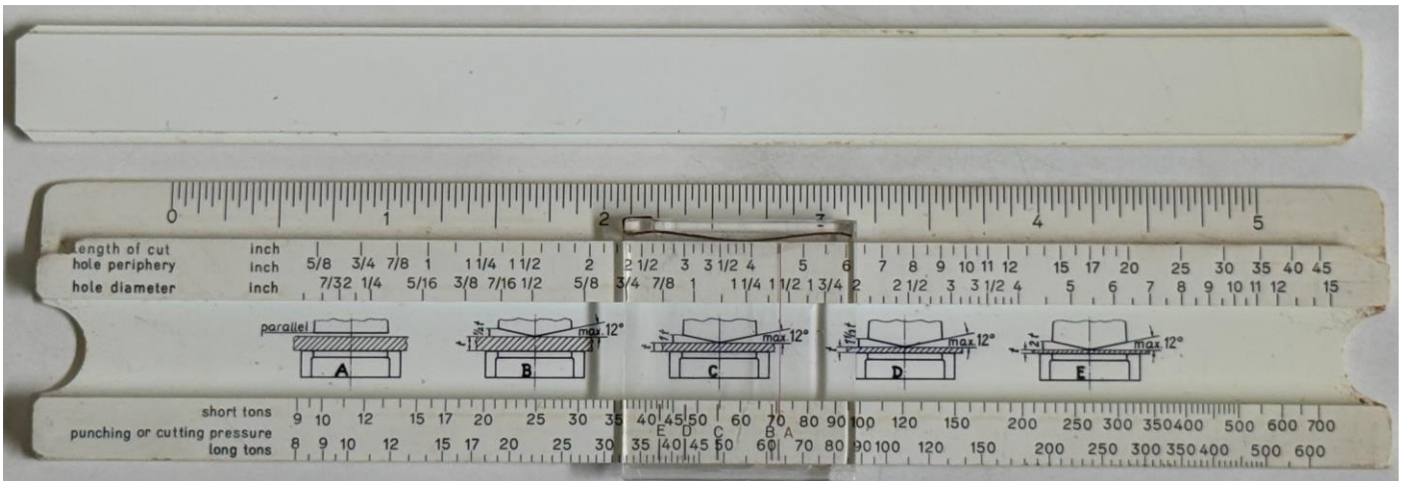
Max punching capacities of hand machines				
size	8	10	13	16
metric tons	7	10	15	20
short tons	7.7	11	16.5	22
long tons	6.9	9.8	14.7	19.7



Paul Ferd. Peddinghaus
Gevelsberg - Germany

Max punching capacities of power machines												
model	210 and 225 H						225 B					
	size	11	13	16	20	25	11	13	16	20	25	30
metric tons	35	50	65	85	120	40	60	80	100	130	160	
short tons	38	55	71	94	132	44	66	88	110	143	176	
long tons	34	49	64	83	118	39	59	79	98	128	157	

Copyright: by Paul Ferd. Peddinghaus, Gevelsberg, Germany



A most unusual device and amazingly it is covered in [Peter Holland's F-C 'bible'](#) – see below for entries in Edition 8.1, Section 3.27 **Specially Commissioned slide rules** though it does not really help and the date code on Cyril's example is much later. The full suite of pictures Cyril sent via an i-Cloud download link – (a most effective way of downloading!) show something pretty unusual with the only clue to the maker being the note on the right hand end of the slide. The date code can also be seen as Cyril mentions.

	cm/§.§		Kunststoff
Peddinghaus, Stanz- und Schnittleistungen	§.§		1961
	§.§		12½
	cm/§.§		Kunststoff
Peddinghaus, Stanz- und Schnittkraft	§.§		1974
	§		12½
auch mit französischer Beschriftung für den französischen Markt			
also made with French inscriptions for the French market			



Hawk-eyed Barbour strikes again!



Nik and I have been exchanging e-mails on Calculii (Calculexes?) one of which is a recent acquisition of his. And also on a second recent gain being a Medium Mech Eng which was in need of some urgent TLC (left) which turns out to have a noticable weird detail which really amazed me! **Note** just how incredibly un-round that scale is, and it is thus after trimming to help it all rotate. Definitely a Friday afternoon scale! It had got so bad that the scale card was starting to delaminate and get fluffy so making it sticky in rotation. Below that a Calculex (Type 3b) which Nik noted had some rather Art Deco flourishes each side of the centre label. He says: “*One other peculiarity of the type 3b, is the scale printing appears to be unique to that model type only. If you look at the attached pic. There are 3 art deco type lines between the two text halves.*”

I've searched a fair bit (not exhaustively) but can only find type 3b's with this scale variant”. Hon Ed See right, and then too right, never spotted that feature at all. The man has a delightful, uncanny knack of spotting weird details!



Contemplation – Rarity

A recent e-mail correspondence with Dean and Rod, and Fred contemplated the subject of Rarity, culminating in Rod coming up with the background on the present method of rating it which is definitely down to Herman van Herwijnen, and goes back to his Blue Books: Rod writes:

“Back in 2003 Herman van Herwijnen proposed a system for slide rule rarity that had been used elsewhere for old cameras viz:

Hon Ed: Actually No! My original “Revised and update of the Blue Book, November 1997 on page SR-13 states: ”*Rarity is still very much an opinion and is later to be issued as a separate list*” and lo and behold also lists “Manufacturers and Manufacturers/ Distributers by a certain Peter Hopp, which takes us back to prehistory! Neither the 1998 nor the 1999 BRL update of the Blue Book mentions Rarity but uses ‘Condition’. Then , surprisingly the 1997 Graphoplex Blue Book, on page 38 ‘Sale Value and Rarity’ gives us the first sight of “Definition of Rarity” - see below



I was aware at that time and before that there were four of us with the intention of writing the “definitive “ book on slide rules, myself, Dieter von Jezierski in Germany, Herman van Herwijnen in Holland, and John Knott also in England. Fortunately the results of those intentions each took individual turns forward and we now have history.

In March 1997 I had issued to a very select audience a 100 plus page home bound paper ”*Catalogue of Slide Rules*” which was intended to see what the reaction of collectors would be, and the recipients had included Dieter, Herman, Colin , John and several others. Subsequently there had been a positive response and I had found more data so that in September 1997 my ideas were definitely book based and a second 140 page version 2 of the *Catalogue* had gone out to a larger audience, Prefaced: “*This Catalogue is effectively one chapter of a more comprehensive book on slide rules I hope to get published in 1998. It has been slightly modified to make it stand alone...*”

Herman’s interest had continued down a more software based approach, ultimately using FileMaker Pro which was fine but a bit of a pain, and debating and adding stuff like Rarity etc., and he had asked to include my **Catalogue** contents which I had gladly given.

At the same time John Knott had basically ran out of steam and Dieter was moving forward to his self-published German “*Rechenschieber eine Dokumentation*” which I have one of the earliest copies inscribed: from Dieter January 1998. It was the earliest “modern” slide rule book, and beat mine by 18 months!

We have to go back a bit further to try and get a flavour of what Herman (and others) was doing in detail. In the First IM, November 1995, Utrecht, Holland; Herman talks about a ‘Catalogue’ (his term) and has a paper discussing “Condition” based on 6 different ideas including McKeown, Brekker and others in different collecting fields. But still nothing on Rarity.

In the Second IM, August 1996, Cambridge,UK; John Brook presented a paper on ‘Quality Coding Systems’ based on the Dutch system of Condition, and we had several other papers on specific UK makers – that was our focus.

The Third IM, Septmber 1997, Stein, Germany, made the point that the UK meeting had not continued the discussion about slide rule ‘coding’ and had been very different in content. The Blue Book, in its final version, was covered in some considerable detail. By this time e-mail had become fairly established (Just think about it!) and Herman and Ijzebrand in Holland regularly were sending out worthy papers on all sorts of coding systems.

In June 1999 my “*Slide Rules*” was published by Astragal Press, and in 2000 Rodger Shepherd’s transtlation of Dieter’s original “Slide Rules” was published also by Astragal. In all these Rarity remained a largely Dutch concern, but I would agree with Rod’s thoughts in the following paragraph the “R” system makes sense and works reasonably but what is Rare and how rare something is, is incredibly subjective.

=====

Rod says: Quoting Herman, Would it be nice to standardize the definition of rarity or do not we care?

I have been propagating a system used by McKeown in his catalogue on old camera's. I have included this in my story for the beginning slide rule collector that I repeat every halve year. This system is using the terms I have seen in other catalogues as well:

- COMMON
- R
- RR
- RRR
- RRRR



and the description relates to how many times you see these items offered at fleamarkets or you see these items in the collections of friends. It then looks like:

COMMON (4 out of 5 collectors have one, can be bought at flea markets)

R (only 1 out of 5 collectors have one, may come up for sale every month)

RR (one out of 25 collectors have one, it may take a year to find one on the market)

RRR (very rare only one or two known under collectors, may take several years before it comes up for sale)

RRRR (extreme rare, museum piece, unlikely it will ever come up for sale)

In my catalogue I would like to use these codes.
Are the other two types of descriptions better? Why?

=====
See: <https://sliderules.lovett.com/groupsio/isrg/displaymessage.cgi?num=22006>

This approach has been used but not widely.

As with Dean's Collection, I would love to see your collection displayed Fred similarly to:

<https://osgalleries.org/collectors/index.html>

I realise it would be a formidable undertaking but what a present for posterity!

Slide Rule Art: Smack!



I was truly delighted at Alan Williams most entertaining new painting giving us two examples in last month's Newsletter. I do hope that further examples appear in due course! I have had a further review of my collection of painterly images, and am genuinely down to a final half-dozen before I run out! This month's item is a bit of a favourite as it does not take slide rules seriously – and she has a delightful derriere!

It is a painting within my definition, and just to confess, my sensibilities were such that the first time I showed this in one of my "People and Slide Rules" Friday evening introductory talks for all participants and their partners at a UK hosted International Meeting, it was edited down to being just the Teacher with the slide rule, and this full image was a "hidden" slide at the end of the presentation for the stayers!

It came to me from the illustrious Jim Bready, – thanks Jim, it has always been a favourite, and its antecedents are very good:

Rear cover of "National Lampoon Art Poster Book" ©1975, so actually about the time of the invention of the electronic pocket calculator which would not look anything like as sensible wielded in a similar situation!



It had to happen! The ISRM picture collection has this delightful study titled “Coed studying in 1962, with a Pickett slide rule”. I’ve never been able to work out what book she is studying with, but she has “The Blue Book” to hand as well and it is definitely a Pickett slide rule she is using as well!

Computing Bear’s Corner

I’m so sorry but I believe that the Bears might be indisposed again – such a shame as I understand that Santa was very kind and granted their wishes for Xmas – we shall learn about their Xmas in the next Newsletter!

Widgetry

The Spring Tape Measure is our item of the month! I’ll make a small wager that there is not a single family in the land that does not have at least one example of this ubiquitous tool, and if your top kitchen drawer (why do all kitchens have one drawer used to hold “useful” stuff) is anything like ours, there will be several maybe none of them actually purchased but all a “freebe” from somewhere?

So who invented the measuring tape? Wikipedia tells us: “James Chesterman, a British metalworker, is credited with the invention of the first retractable tape measure in 1821.^[6] His design consisted of a spring-loaded cloth strip with marked measurements, housed within a compact case. Building upon his prior design, Chesterman would patent the first steel tape measure” Fair enough, see <https://tinyurl.com/3nrm2ae3>



And then to make the obvious link, we do have Chesterman’s Cattle Gauge from the original designer of such tapes as both measure and slide rule, see Nathan’s wonderful site for more:

<https://www.nzeldes.com/HOC/CattleGauge.htm>

The fact that these are popular advertising items leads me down a first digression, that of “Beads for the Natives”. As someone whose working life was spent in a company that sold technical stuff, whenever we travelled abroad, we were effectively also wearing a salesman’s hat and expected to sell Marconi products and services,

and so all who travelled would have called into the Publicity Department prior to our trip and availed ourselves of a few “Goodies” emblazoned with the latest Marconi logo which we could leave with the customers we were visiting. It was a permanent bone of contention that the standard Marconi “Beads” were poor fare and did not reflect well on us. The Marconi marked Parker Biro was about the only thing that was “good”, but once every one had their Marconi Biro it was hard work. The item that catalysed this “Widgets” column was thrust on me by one of the good ladies in Publicity who was quite fed up with my regular and very vocal complaints about the junk we were offered: “Ah Hoppy, take a few of these lovely Tape Measures, steel tape, inches and centimetres, nice solid metal case” and so half a dozen of these joined the collection of Biros in my brief case. (Note: The picture at left below is of one of my original “Marconi”



tape measures now completely devoid of label but showing the button I had failed to find, also a recent Xmas cracker steel tape measure and the ‘family’ 5-metre tape measure all immediately to hand from the kitchen drawer). The Marconi tapes originally came in a nice card box and did look good! Being the cautious soul I am, before the first occasion I might offer these I took one out of its box to inspect it, pulled out the steel tape, yes very nice indeed, but could I get it back in its case? Could I heck! I pushed and prodded and manually started pushing the tape back, but that was going to be a long job! So out came a second example and that was pulled out, not so far this time, and once again I could not get the dratted thing retracted into its case. Cursing Marconi junk again, the two measures with their yard of extracted tape were wrapped in a spare

shirt and returned to my suit-case to be returned – vocally – to Publicity on my return home.

Which duly happened, whereupon the good lady nonchalantly pressed the small and to me not at all obvious button, and “zip” the tape was back in its case! Simple! And the look on her face – ‘Duh’ – was totally deserved. It took a while to live that one down, but I became a strong advocate of Marconi tape-measures, and it is why I still have two of them – the ones I could never get to work, which are very battered now, but they still work!

A second digression! On odd occasions – few and far between – some of us seniorish Marconi staff might be called upon to sign a contract with a customer on behalf of the company. Such occasions were greeted with great solemnity, and we were expected to sign the contract with a “posh” fountain pen (more in a moment) and also to legitimise the occasion we had to pay a call on a local Commissioner for Oaths (Notary Public) in Chelmsford High Street opposite the Lion and Lamb hotel, whose double-barrelled name escapes me, and who have probably long ago closed, but who took their job extremely seriously at that time! My first ever visit resulted in red faces all-round – I breezed in announced who I was and declared that I had come to commission an oath, “something stronger than a “Damn” but not as strong as a “Bloody”” whereupon Mr. very round and red faced appeared from behind a desk and told me in no uncertain terms to take it much more seriously! Ooops! Oh Dear! Several minutes of swearing while clutching a Bible and signing various legal papers and I was allowed out clutching my “Authority to Sign” portfolio which was only legal until midnight on a certain date in the future, and had to be returned on my return home! Used or unused! My question “GMT or local time?” similarly fell on deaf ears. Ah well, onward and upward!

Anyway with my “Authority” I was now allowed to indent for a “posh” fountain pen, ‘contract suitable for the signing



of’, from Publicity. This too was not a simple task. Really posh high value contracts could be signed with a Mont Blanc (left). I never flew that high, my fare was posh Parker, which was ceremoniously filled with Blue Quink, (who remembers Quink?) placed in its posh Marconi marked box and I was reminded to hand it over as a Marconi gift to whoever signed for the customer. The first time this happened – ever cautious me, the pen was surreptitiously tried on a gash piece of paper, and would not write! No way no how! Furtive frantic flicking under the table to get the ink running resulted in a large blue blob on their conference room carpet, and we signed with one of my spare Marconi Parker Bicos. That Parker fountain pen was returned to Publicity and must have had a hex of some sort as it never worked for the next bloke who had it either. My second contract and the Parker fountain pen worked beautifully and that customer was very proud of his Marconi Parker 51 for years after. A third occasion we ended up signing with the customer’s Black Bic (I can’t



remember why) which I filched and used for years myself! On one occasion I completely forgot to return the “Authority” and ended up with the Bailiff’s calling at work – most embarrassing, but it was truly serious stuff, definitely not to be taken lightly!



This final image shows two other items of “beads”: Key rings, always quite a popular “bead” but these show one example pressed into service for chez Hopp’s back door key, and a second from distant days showing how the change in company names must have caused great pleasure to the purveyors of such beads! The bottom one with the iconic and very recognisable Marconi Circles is the older, the upper example shows the results of a focus group to simplify!

An interesting and entertaining Virtual Xmas present:

I very much enjoyed receiving this most excellent Mug just before Xmas :



truly marvellous tool and did come up with this mug, nothing like as attractive a device, see <https://tinyurl.com/mr3xk9wn> for the Cafe Press mug at a lot of money! So the moral of this musing is – How much would you pay to be made a mug of?

And as the giver wished it promptly had me Musing on all sorts of things including another similar mug my daughter had bought for me many moons ago from Amazon, my precious Slide Rule Mug which despite being incredibly faded I had without conscious thought recently re-glued the handle (always risky, but what the heck, it is precious) and as Plan B I had a peer into the Amazon jungle and lo and behold the wretched company no longer sold the mug, or indeed any like it! Oh Woe! So Could I find another? The internet is a





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P.S Something called Zazzle will provide a made to order copy of my presently glued mug, see <https://tinyurl.com/enpa843s>

I'm not sure what the postage is but the mug itself is remarkably sensibly priced.

Last of the big spenders me, I continue with my glued original present from my daughter!

PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO REGISTER WITH JERRY - jerry.uksrc@gmail.com – FOR THE ZOOM MEETING.

Sunday, January 26th, 2025

That's It! Enjoy and Please Continue to Respond. Cheers! Pete.