

WOLF'S PLUMB BOB NEWS 2013

Issue 06 June 1, 2013

WHAT'S IT? IS IT A PLUMB BOB? PART II

Author: Wolf Ruecker

www.plumbbobcollectors.info

Dear Fellow Collector,

Dear reader of the PLUMB BOB NEWS,

Please, as always I am in search of new photos, catalogs, articles or personal stories about any aspect of PLUMB BOBS from you. Any help is appreciated.

If you have any information or pictures for these themes, please let me know.

Thank you, looking forward to hearing from you

Wolf

WHAT'S IT? IS IT A PLUMB BOB? PART II

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION.....	69
2. TWO PLUMB BOB WEIGHTS BELL SHAPED	69
3. EXPLOSIVE "PLUMB BOB"	71
4. SETS OF EDWARD PRESTON PLUMB BOBS.....	72
5. SEWING MACHINE "PLUMB BOB".....	73
6. UPDATE NEWSLETTER 2013-03 (PLUMB LEVELS FOR CHIMNEYS).....	75
7. SOMETHING TO SMILE ABOUT.....	76
8. REMARKS	76



1. INTRODUCTION

Today some more answers to questions that I got from friends and other collectors.

I also use this newsletter for some updates of former newsletters.

I just bought on EBay the two bell shaped pieces from chapter 2 and will install them in my museum on one of the doors.

(one corner of the museum in the photo below)



If you have any questions about plumb bobs or things looking like plumb bobs, please feeling free to ask.

2. TWO PLUMB BOB WEIGHTS BELL SHAPED



Recently was offered on EBay in France:

“2 anciens poids de fil à plomb en forme de cloche” (two plumb bob weights in the shape of a bell)

I was asked: ARE THAT REALLY PLUMB BOBS?

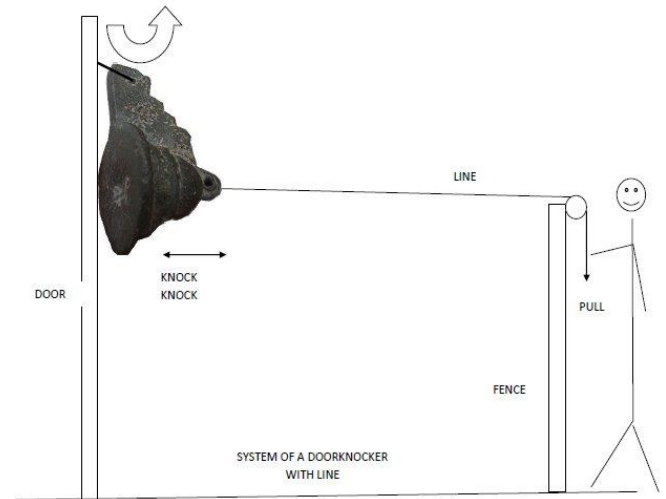
No these parts are no plumb bobs.

- They are not symmetrical
- They have two holes for a line or an axe

OK, we know bell shaped plumb bobs, especially in France (see photos below), but they are different.



It is a French **DOOR KNOCKER**, commanded by a line and not directly knocked against the wooden door of the house.



THIS PART WAS USED IN FRANCE ON DOORS TO KNOCK AT IT. MORE YOU CAN SEE IN A DRAWING THAT I MADE SOME YEARS AGO. THERE WAS A LINE OR A WIRE FIXED TO PULL THE LINE WITH THE HAND FROM A DISTANCE, WHEN THE VISITOR STANDS FAR AWAY FROM THE DOOR.

Below some other photos from (very special) examples of this tool. NO PLUMB BOBS AT ALL! ☺



More about FRENCH PLUMB BOBS you will find in the BOOK ON CD from my friend and specialist for French Plumb Bobs Riccardo Chetoni "FRENCH PLUMB BOBS". (please ask for conditions)

Some time ago I was searching for this special tool and found:



3. EXPLOSIVE "PLUMB BOB"



In 2006 was offered on EBay a "patented plumb bob" from England.

At the first view it reminded me on a plumb bob used in the ancient Egypt. They used stones with an engraved groove to hold a plumb line. But searching for the patent in the British Patent Office I found a patent from 1931 for an explosive TOY BOMB:

PATENT SPECIFICATION

355,001

Application Date: Aug. 1, 1930. No. 23,170 / 30.

Complete Left: April 23, 1931.

Complete Accepted: Aug. 20, 1931.

PROVISIONAL SPECIFICATION.

Improvements in Toy Bombs.

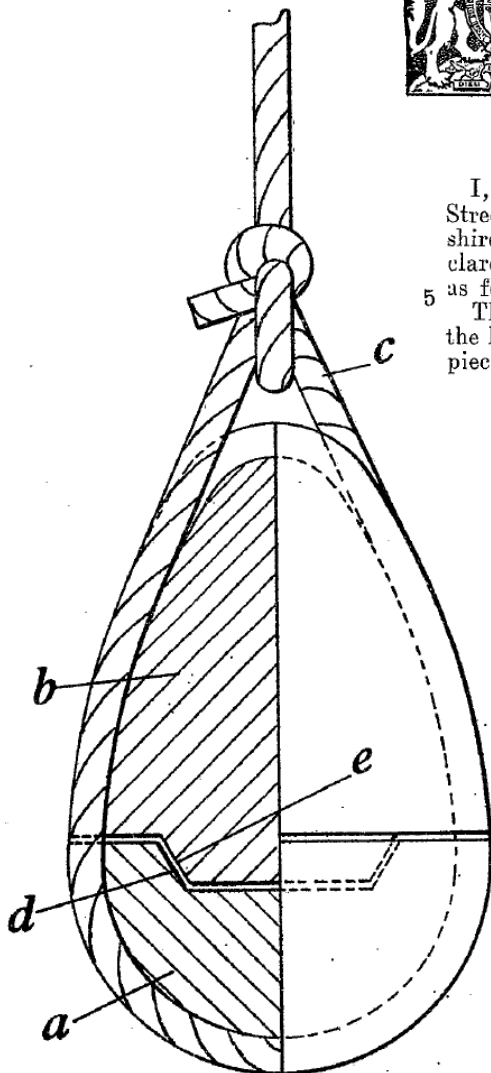


I, BRADBURY JOHN DEXTER, 80, Rowley Street, Walsall, in the County of Staffordshire, British Nationality, do hereby declare the nature of this invention to be as follows:—

The invention relates to toy bombs of the kind comprising two loosely connected pieces of cast iron between which an

explosive cap is located, and consists in forming a recess in bottom portion to hold explosive cap, with a projecting piece on top portion to act as a hammer when bomb is dropped.

Dated the 31st day of July, 1930.
B. J. DEXTER.



This invention relates to toy bombs of the kind in which an ovoid metal body made from two parts is adapted for the insertion of a percussion cap between the 25 parts, the latter being held together by a string or other flexible means located in a groove around the parts.

Ordinarily the adjacent faces of the two parts are flat, consequently difficulty is 30 sometimes experienced in holding the cap in position. Also the action of such bombs is often defective in that the cap does not receive a proper blow when the bomb is dropped on the ground.

The object of the present invention is 35 to provide a toy bomb of improved construction, and the invention comprises a bomb in which a recess is provided in the face of one of the parts to receive the cap, 40 and a corresponding projection is provided on the adjacent face of the other part.

4. SETS OF EDWARD PRESTON PLUMB BOBS

Question from a friend from the USA:

Could you please tell me what is a COMPLETE SET OF EDWARD PRESTON PLUMB BOBS from Great Britain?

And how can I see the difference between the BEST QUALITY and the SECOND QUALITY of this maker?

The tool maker EDWARD PRESTON (EP) made a lot of different weighing plumb bobs.

The different sizes and the difference between BEST and SECOND QUALITY you can see in the catalog EP 1909 p75.

Fig. right: EP FIRST QUALITY from the collection of Riccardo Chetoni.

Fig. below SECOND QUALITY



EP # 12
4 lb
BEST
QUALITY

collection
Wolf Ruecker

More about ENGLISH PLUMB BOBS you find in my NEWSLETTERS 2010-04 and 2010-05

EDWARD PRESTON & SONS, LTD.

BRASS PLUMB BOBS.



BEST QUALITY.

These Plumb Bobs are made with removable screwed tops for inserting the line. They are accurately turned and have steel points.

The weights given are approximate.

No. 1403.	1½oz.	2½oz.	3½oz.	4½oz.	6oz.	8oz.	10oz.	13oz.
	00	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
	6/6	8/-	10/-	12/-	14/-	16/-	20/-	25/- per dozen.
	11b.	1¼lbs.	1½lbs.	2lb.	2½lb.	3lb.	4lb.	
	6½	7	8	9	10	11	12	
	29/-	34/-	44/-	56/-	70/-	85/-	104/-	per dozen.

Larger sizes can be supplied to order.



TWO RINGS

BRASS PLUMB BOBS.

SECOND QUALITY.

These Plumb Bobs differ slightly from our well-known No. 1403 Best Quality Pattern above, and are introduced as a cheaper article. While not being quite so well finished as our No. 1403, they may be accepted as reliable tools.

The weights given are approximate.

No. 1405.	1½oz.	2½oz.	3oz.	4½oz.	6oz.	8oz.	10oz.	13oz.
	00	0	01	2	3	4	5	6
	4/9	6/-	7/6	9/-	11/3	14/-	16/9	21/- per dozen.
	11b.	1¼lbs.	1½lbs.	2lbs.	2½lbs.	3lbs.		
	6½	7	8	9	10	11		
	26/-	32/-	40/-	52/-	64/-	76/-	per dozen.	



SHOULDER

NO RINGS
BULLET TYPE TIP

5. SEWING MACHINE “PLUMB BOB”

Here is a funny research story that happened to me.

On EBay was offered from Rome NY, USA in 2009:

VERY RARE CAST IRON PLUMB BOB “PAT AUG 31 1858 NY” RAISED LINES OF PATENT DEFINED AND CLEARLY LEGIBLE. MEASURES 3 ¾” LONG x 1 ½” DIAMETER AND WEIGHTS 5 ½ OZ

For me such a patented plumb bob was very interesting. I bid and won it for \$48

The photo of the auction looked like this: NO DOUBT THAT THIS IS A PLUMB BOB (FIG. RIGHT)



On one side there was a very big hole in the body. It looked like something was broken off there. The only positive parts were the very clear signature with patent dates and the iron tip.



But what a (negative) surprise, when the “plumb bob” arrived:

There was no hole on top to fix a small line, but a very big crate for a rope ☹



Now I started my research in the US PATENT OFFICE. At that time it was not as easy as today where GOOGLE has his own patent searching page.

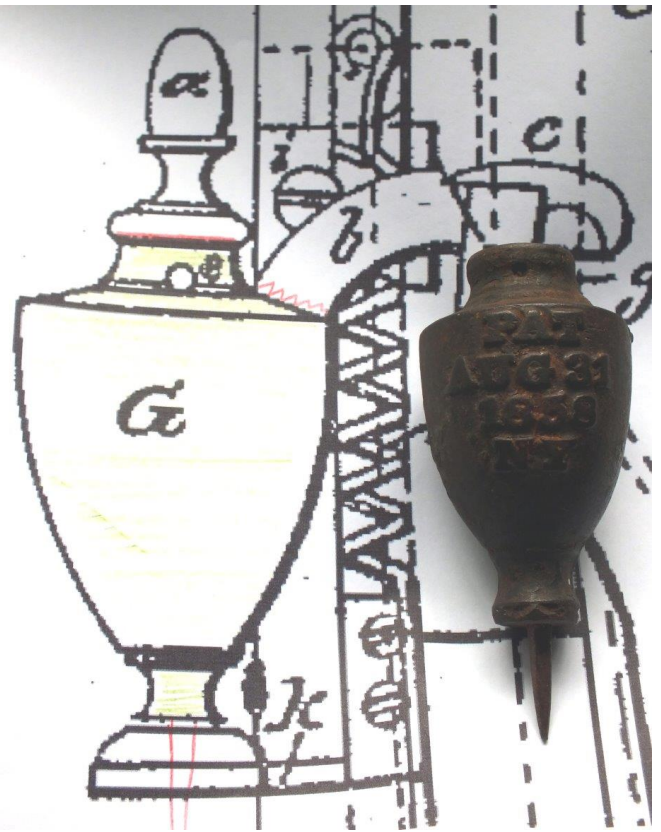
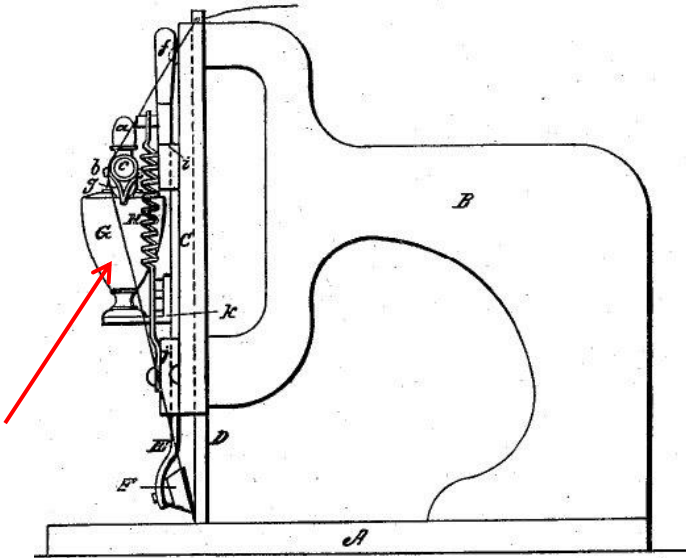
I found on this special date no patents for a plumb bob. So I had to open all patents of this day (several hundreds) to have a look to the patent drawings for a similar shape. Finally I found a patent US 21361 that matches with this date, but it was not for plumb bob, but for a “DEVICE FOR **OILING THREAD IN SEWING MACHINES**”. Not really very familiar with a plumb bob.

In the drawings I found the shape of my “plumb bob”. (see next page)

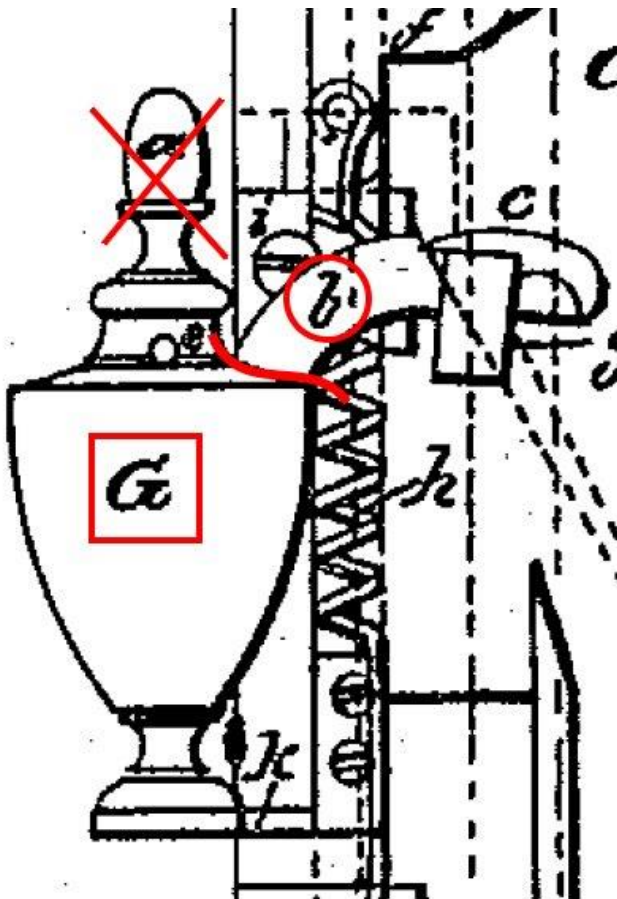
The spout “b” was broken off, the part “a” was missing, but an iron tip was added at the bottom.

More you will find in the following pictures. After discussing with the seller he reduced the price and now I have a very interesting piece for my newsletter.

Fig. 1.



I modified it a little bit by putting in some cork into the big hole on top to fix the line. So I can hang it into my museum or use it as a real plumb bob ☺



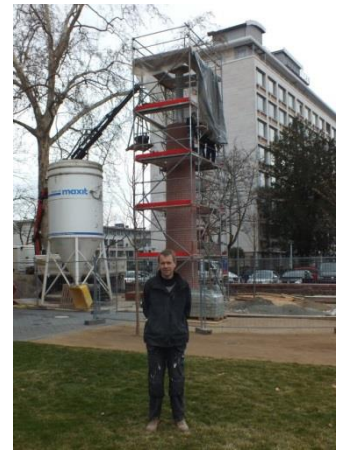
G is the vessel for holding the oil or saturating substance, and is provided with a neck or spout, b, which is filled with some porous absorbing material, c and g, as plainly seen in the figures, and also with a valve, a, inserted in the vessel G. In the vessel G there is an orifice, e, and also a corresponding orifice in the valve-plug a.



6. UPDATE NEWSLETTER 2013-03 (PLUMB LEVELS FOR CHIMNEYS)

After shipping my newsletter 2013-03 where I wrote about the building of brick chimneys and the use of the instruments to verify the verticality or the inclination of the chimneys I had the chance to meet the artist Jan Svennungsson from Sweden, now living in Berlin, Germany. He is building chimneys as an artwork. His eleventh chimney was built in the area of the STAEDEL MUSEUM in Frankfurt, Germany:

I visited the artist and his crew on the building plot. In this case for the low chimneys they used an adapted kind of plumb bob, a number of strings that are fixed between the bottom and a wooden board at the top like a spin web. For former constructions they used a special made board with a level on the top. See photos right.

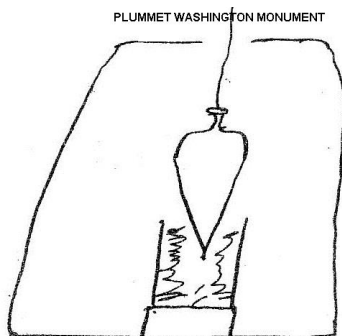


7. SOMETHING TO SMILE ABOUT

Perhaps you remember my newsletter 2009-06 THE PLUMB BOB OF WASHINGTON MONUMENT IN WASHINGTON D.C. (for download on my site)

To dampen the swinging / oscillation of a plumb bob on a long string is used by the mining engineers a pot filled with water or oil.

The same did the engineers in the Washington Monument. See drawing below.



from the U. S. National Archives found by John Lockwood

from the letter of Thomas to Wilson April 7, 1888

only picture/drawing of the plumb bob that I could find

In descriptions of the system and in newspapers all reporters mentioned WATER as medium.

But in an article of the Richfield Springs NY Daily 1910 the reporter who visited the building wrote:

"... THIS CONTAINS A LONG PENDULUM, WHOSE BOB HANGS IN A VESSEL OF **MERCURY**, WHICH PREVENTS ITS OSCILLATION. ... "

the cost of the mercury.

From the extreme top of the monument inside a long pipe line runs perpendicularly to the bottom, leading to a small closet behind the elevator. This contains a long pendulum, whose bob hangs in a vessel of mercury, which prevents its oscillation. Two stationary transits with highly magnifying lenses are focussed directly upon the suspended wire, and through these each quiver of the monument is detected, being magnified on a fine scale graduated to thousandths of an inch.

I think the reporter was looking into the dark room with the vessel and the plumb bob and saw the grey surface of the water (with the dust of some years). That looked not like water, but like mercury. But remember the chemistry and physics lessons at school:

8. REMARKS

This is an article of the monthly published WOLF'S PLUMB BOB NEWS that is sent on demand as PDF-file attachment by email. FREE.

You can see all former publications on the website

www.plumbbobcollectors.info

on page "download publications". or on page "WHAT'S NEW?"

Remarks and contact by email: plumbbobwolf@t-online.de

Enjoy it

Wolf

Ps. For the members of our group the whole world turns around the plumb bob as shown in our logo right. ☺

The specific weight of mercury 847 lb/ft³ is much higher than the specific weight of brass 540 lb/ft³. (water has 62.4 lb/ft³)

The result would be that the BRASS PLUMB BOB would not dive into the liquid MERCURY, but it would swim on the surface. Maybe it will drift to the edge of the container. See my drawing:



To verify my theory I made a test: THE BRASS PLUMB BOB WAS SWIMMING ON THE MERCURY

Not everything you read in a newspaper (and in my newsletters ☺) is the truth. Don't believe all that you read without thinking about it.



Logo of the International Plumb Bob Collectors