

Antiquarian Horological Society

Finding Aid - DRAISEY, HENRY (DRA)

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Antiquarian Horological Society

4 Lovat Lane

London

United Kingdom

EC3R 8DT

Telephone: +44 20 7062 7479

[Email: archives@ahsoc.org](mailto:archives@ahsoc.org)

<https://www.ahsoc.org/>

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DRAISEY, HENRY

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Summary information

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| Repository: | Antiquarian Horological Society |
| Title: | DRAISEY, HENRY |
| Reference code: | DRA |
| Date: | mostly 20th century (creation) |
| Physical description: | 2 boxes (0.33 linear metres) |

Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Henry Draisey (1896–1975) was a clockmaker and Fellow of the British Horological Institute from 1953/54. He began his clockmaking career in 1920 with Niehus Bros of 39-40 Bridge Street in Bristol, ‘manufacturers of English church, turret and factory clocks’, both locally and for international markets. From a 1931 reference letter, we know that he ‘undertook the work of supervising and estimating for inside and outside work including the making and repairs of turret clocks. Mr Niehus considered him a first-class workman and had complete confidence in him.’

Presumably while working at Niehus, Henry assisted an amateur maker, Mr Mosely (an engineer from Bristol) to make a longcase clock designed to demonstrate Grimthorpe’s gravity escapement. Mosely was 82 when the project was started in 1923, and it took three years to complete. Draisey would encounter the clock again later in life.

Mr Niehus’s poor health led to the closure of the firm and Henry’s redundancy in late 1931. He then worked on his own as a clockmaker through the Great Depression.

From 30 June 1947, he worked for Pleasance and Harper, also in Bristol, a firm that described him in a reference of May 1951 as ‘perfectly honest and a thoroughly experienced clockmaker, able to undertake complicated and difficult work’. While working for the firm, Ernest G. Harper, chair of Pleasance and Harper, submitted an application form to the BHI on Henry’s behalf in January 1949, commenting on his significant skills (‘he can make any part of any size for any type of clock’), and the fact his own workshop staff begged him to employ Henry ‘for what they can learn from him’. Harper suggested he should be considered for the award of a Fellowship of the Institute, as he ‘would pass with flying colours any exam either practical or theoretical’. Henry duly transferred from CMBHI to FBHI in 1952 (*Horological Journal*, November 1952). While still at Pleasance and Harper, the Moseley clock was cleaned by the firm, and transferred to the Mansion House in Bristol.

Finally, Henry worked for Llewellyn’s Machine Company, working on timekeeping equipment in all areas, including watchman’s clocks and time recorders, though he clearly had a long independent career working in clocks.

Scope and content

This collection comprises material created and collected by the Bristol clockmaker Henry Draisey. It contains notebooks, drawings, plans, correspondence, photographs, glass plate negatives and printed material (books, newspaper cuttings, catalogues, price lists, etc.).

Notes

Immediate source of acquisition

Deposited at the AHS at Lovat Lane in February 2023 by Henry Draisey's grandson, Mark Raymond Draisey.

Arrangement

The collection was deposited as loose material, in no discernible order.

Restrictions on access

These records are mostly available for public access by prior appointment. Records containing personal information are subject to access restrictions under the UK Data Protection Act, 2018.

Accruals

No further deposits are expected.

Other notes

- **Publication status:** Published
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Series descriptions

Series DRA/01: CLOCKMAKING AND REPAIR NOTEBOOKS

Date: n.d. [early 20th c.] (creation)

Scope and content: These notebooks contain definitions, descriptions, notes and comments on various types and examples of clocks, movements, technical matters etc., with diagrams. Written in neat, almost calligraphic handwriting in black and red ink, they may have initially been compiled as part of a clockmaker's training, as some paragraphs in notebook no. 1 are marked 'very good'. They are captioned 'H. Draisey Esq., clockmaker, 216 Bath Road, Bristol'

Physical description: 10 files

Publication status:

Published

| File / item list | | | |
|-------------------------|---|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Reference code | Title | Dates | Physical description |
| DRA/01/001 | File - Clockmaking notebook no. 1 <i>Scope and content:</i> 107 double-sided pages. Topics include: cosmography and horology, brief history of timepieces and clocks, and descriptions of clepsydra, verges, different types of escapements, wheels and pinions, laws governing the pendulum, etc. With diagrams. | n.d. [early 20th c.] | 1 volume in a folder |
| DRA/01/002 | File - Clockmaking notebook no. 2 <i>Scope and content:</i> 66 double-sided pages. Topics include: balance / hair spring, balance staff, remontoire movement, music as applied to horology, the best bells to use when fitting chime clock's hammers, accepting orders for large turret clocks, carillions, pendulum lengths, silvering clock dials, recipe for cleaning solution, sidereal and solar days, meridian dial, early clocks, etc. Also includes loose notes on related topics. With diagrams. | n.d. [early 20th c.] | 1 volume in a folder |
| DRA/01/003 | File - Clockmaking notebook no. 3 <i>Scope and content:</i> 140 pages. Topics include: early clocks, pendulum springs, pendulum regulation, compensation of pendulums, heaviest pendulums, wooden rods, mercurial compensation, half-dead escapement, pin wheel escapement, pin pallets, the four-legged escapement, the double three-legged escapement, electrical clocks, tell-tale clocks, church / turret clocks, etc. With diagrams. | n.d. [early 20th c.] | 1 volume in a folder |
| DRA/01/004 | File - Clockmaking notebook no. 4 <i>Scope and content:</i> 121 pages. Topics include: turret clocks, new chime machinery (by Gillett & Bland and Lund & Blockley), clock hammers, public clock specifications, train remontoires, bells, etc. Also includes a list of great belles pasted in at the end, and loose notes on related topics. With diagrams. | n.d. [early 20th c.] | 1 volume in a folder |
| DRA/01/005 | File - Clockmaking notebook no. 5 <i>Scope and content:</i> 120 pages. Topics include: bells, composition of bell metal, tolling levers, bell ropes, Ellacombe's chiming hammers, stays and sliders, gudgeons, iron stocks and frames, clapping, bell towers, etc. With diagrams. | n.d. [early 20th c.] | 1 volume in a folder |
| DRA/01/006 | File - Clockmaking notebook no. 6 <i>Scope and content:</i> 108 pages. Topics include: quarter chime movement, recoil escapement, watch and clock trains, weights and sizes of bells of St Philip's and St Jacob's church in Bristol, pendulum bobs, metals, turret clocks done by H. Draisey, compensated balance, dead-beat escapement, pinor jewel pallets, Americal pallets, hour and quarter chime snails, rack work, turret clock dial work, the Universe, the Solar System, the Year, turret clocks locking plate. warning and stop work, electric clocks balance type, the gravity escapement, enameled iron dials, hard soldering, electric gilding, batteries, dial clock train, recipe for French polish, the Wells Clock, the Big Ben, etc. With diagrams. | n.d. [early 20th c.] | 1 volume in a folder |
| DRA/01/007 | File - Subject index to clockmaking notebooks nos. 1-6 <i>Scope and content:</i> 2 pages only, written on the insides of hardback covers removed from a notebook (notebook not present) | n.d. [early 20th c.] | loose covers in a folder |

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| DRA/01/008 | <p>File - Clockmaking notebook n.d. [early 20th c.] 1 volume in a folder</p> <p><i>Scope and content:</i> Unnumbered and unpaginated. Topics include various striking movements and g.f. clock trains. Also includes loose notes with prices of clock repairs. With diagrams,</p> |
| DRA/01/009 | <p>File - Clockmaking notebook n.d. [early 20th c.] 1 volume in a folder</p> <p><i>Scope and content:</i> Unnumbered and unpaginated. Topics include turret striking movements, g.f. clock trains, church clock dials and hands, prices of turret repairs, etc. Also includes loose notes on related topics. With diagrams.</p> |
| DRA/01/010 | <p>File - Clock repair notebook 1947 - 1948 1 volume in a folder</p> <p><i>Scope and content:</i> Gives customer's name, type of clock, work carried out, price, and in a few cases date. Also includes loose notes.</p> |