

Corkscrews:

British Registered Designs



Frank Ellis and Barbara Ellis

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Section 2

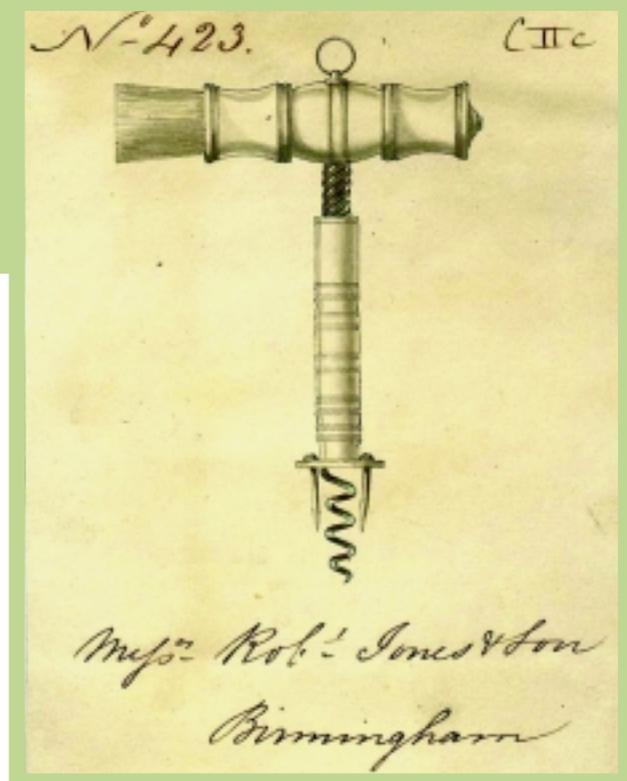
Registered designs from 1840 to 1883

This Section covers the period of the early registration drawings, the development of descriptive text and the first Provisional registrations. During the second half of this period, 1867 to 1883, most registered corkscrews bear a diamond mark. It was a device to indicate the date of registration using a code of letters and numbers. The mark indicated that the design was protected by copyright but was clearly used as a statement of quality to show buyers that the item was "worthy of purchase".

8 October 1840

Registration number 423

Robert Jones & Son,
Cheapside, Birmingham



The upper part of the brass sleeve is stamped ROBERT JONES & SON MAKERS 105 CHEAPSIDE BIRMINGHAM REGISTERED No 423 8TH OCTR 1840 and the edge of the button has VR with a crown.

Registration number 423 was the first registered design for a corkscrew and one that is sought and prized by many collectors and often referred to as Jones I. It is an innovative design and would probably have been granted a patent if Jones had applied for one. The register for this historic corkscrew states nothing more than "No 423 – a corkscrew design of Robert Jones & Son was registered at eleven in the forenoon of 8th Oct 1840".

The cleverness of the design lies in the two spikes and the brass button which ensure that the worm is positioned correctly before starting to screw it in. The pitch of the threaded shank has to be the same as that of the wire worm, otherwise the helix will rip out the centre of the cork. This is a clear way of telling whether a worm has been replaced. Once the helix is fully inserted, the

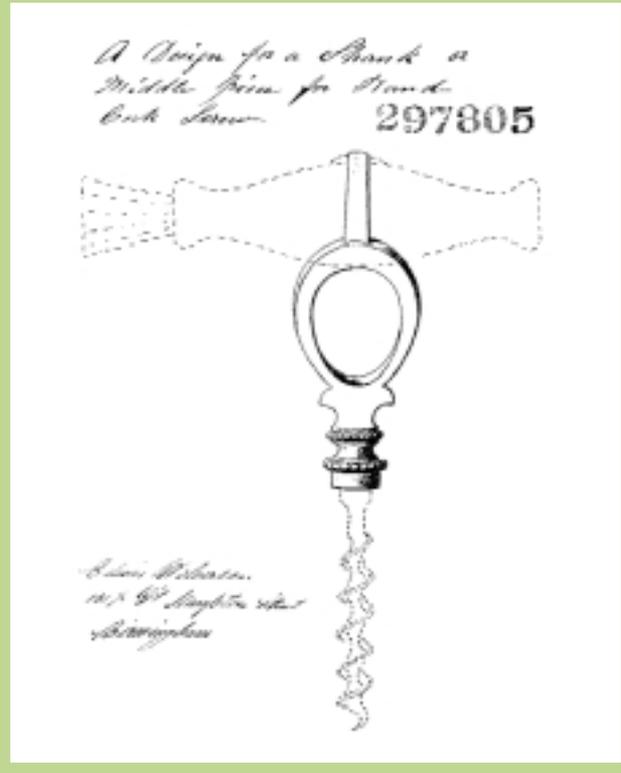
22 January 1876

Registration number 297805

Edwin Wolverson,
131½, Gt. Hampton Street, Birmingham

A design for a shank or middle piece for a hand corkscrew

Wolverson created another popular design with this corkscrew which is known as the Holborn Signet. The corkscrew is known in both steel and brass versions and stamped HOLBORN SIGNET plus a registration diamond. Examples of the more common style do not have brushes fitted. However, the uncommon example (centre) has a clear diamond mark but is not marked HOLBORN SIGNET. It has a very different shank and is fitted with a brush. Unmarked versions are relatively common and are sometimes marked R. JONES and have slightly larger finger holes.



This corkscrew of Wolverson was probably named "Holborn Signet" after the Holborn Hill area in Aston, Birmingham. It was in Aston that Wolverson lived in the 1870s. However the unrelated HOLBORN LEVER (Wallis page 101) was patented by H. A. Goodall of Bartlett's Buildings, Holborn Circus, London in 1885 and therefore that reference is to London's Holborn district. Interestingly though, the Holborn Lever has similarities to Wolverson's Tangent Lever (of 1873), especially the oval brass hinge. Perhaps there was a business or family link between Goodall and Wolverson.

Section 3

Registered designs from 1884 to 1977

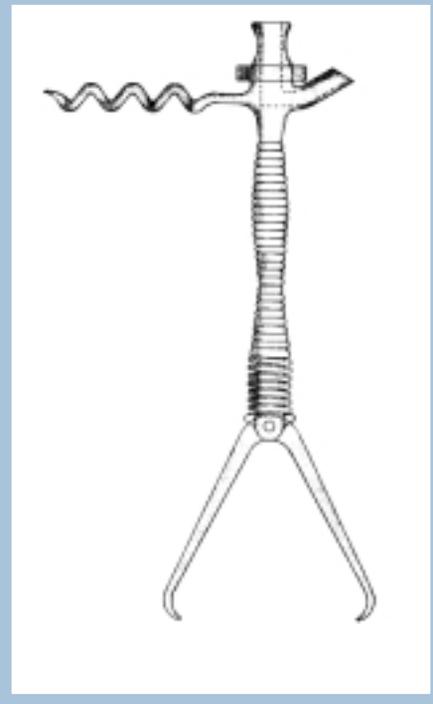
The 1883 Copyright of Designs Act changed the way in which articles had to be marked and the classification of designs. From 1884 onwards there was just one simple numerical sequence, no classifications and no diamond registration marks. There was no descriptive text to go with the diagrams, but information on the length of copyright protection was given for later registrations.

19 July 1884

Registration number 10035

**Walter Vaughan,
134, Cattell Road, Small Heath,
Birmingham in the County of Warwick**

The design is for a combined corkscrew; cork extractor; and syphon. The design is for the shape.



This most unlikely object was probably never made. One end is a Codd bottle marble pusher with spout. The two claws are presumably for grabbing protruding corks (champagne?) and pulling them out. It is spring loaded in the open position.

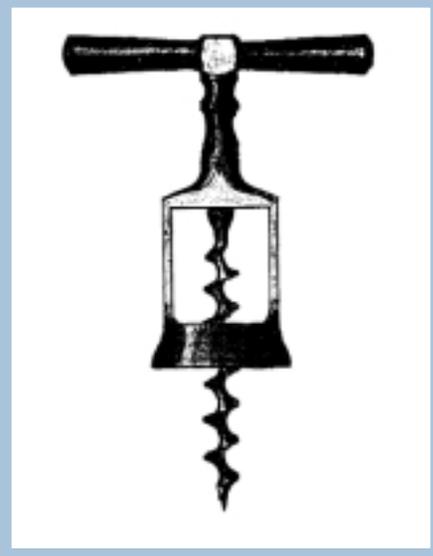
It was the first of four designs from Walter Vaughan. They all featured Codd bottle openers. Two are somewhat fanciful and two are relatively practical - one was certainly manufactured.

18 September 1884

Registration number 13185

**George Willetts, steel toy maker,
Heneage Street, Birmingham,**

Corkscrew, the novelty consists in the shape of the handle and "bell"



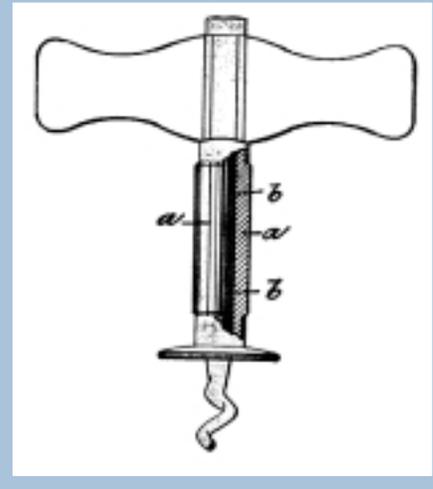
The "SURPRISE" is one of the most common registered corkscrew and must have been a great success for the Willetts company. It is a simple self puller with a characteristic slender handle stamped in the centre REGISTERED 13185. Most examples are plated, but bronze washed ones are also known. The number is often poorly defined.

7 November 1892

Registration number 202169

**Berkeley and Company, Steel toy manufacturer,
Henry St., Ashted, Birmingham**

*Protecting tubular casing for the stem of corkscrew. Protecting
tubular casing-Partly in elevation and partly in section.*



There are a number of versions of this very characteristic corkscrew. The first example pictured shows the shank with a brown wooden tubular casing with nickel plated brass collars at the top and bottom. The upper one is stamped R^d 202169. The nickel plated buttons all have knurled edges; some have flat edges whilst others have a V-shaped edge. The worms always

seem to be a triangular section helix (cyphered). In W.B. Fordham's catalogue of 1895, registered design 202169 was described as "The Comfortable" and sold for 18 shillings per dozen (£0.90 for 12) (information from Fletcher Wallis).

Pictured is a selection of Berkeley corkscrews all marked R^d 202169 on the upper band on the shank. One other variation is known with a black painted wooden handle and black celluloid casing with knob – the same shape as central one in the top row.



Black painted wooden handle and casing



Steel handle and brown wooden casing



Steel handle and black painted wooden casing

4 January 1933

Registration numbers 779324

**Pearson-Page-Jewsbury Co. Ltd.,
Soho Works, Western Road, Birmingham**



Copyright expired 4 January 1938



This dog is one of the most common of the animals and must have been very popular. The example is marked R^d N^o 779324. It is sometimes seen without the worm as an ash tray decoration.

4 January 1933

Registration numbers 779325

**Pearson-Page-Jewsbury Co. Ltd.,
Soho Works, Western Road, Birmingham**



Copyright expired 4 January 1938



The "just good friends" dog pair is one of the most common and hence very popular corkscrews. The example is marked R^d N^o 779325. The dogs are sometimes seen without the worm as an ash tray decoration.

4 January 1933

Registration numbers 779326

**Pearson-Page-Jewsbury Co. Ltd.,
Soho Works, Western Road, Birmingham**



Copyright expired 4 January 1938



The pig is probably the least common of the series. The example is marked R^d N^o 779326.

19 January 1933

Registration number 779768

**Colin Edmonds Pascal (British subject),
242, Maryvale Road, Bournville, Birmingham**



*Copyright extended once
to expire 19 January 1938
Copyright extended twice
to expire 19 January 1943*



Shown in the original photograph as a cast handle.

The corkscrew has a hanging hole and eyebrow handle and is marked clearly on the back REG 779768.

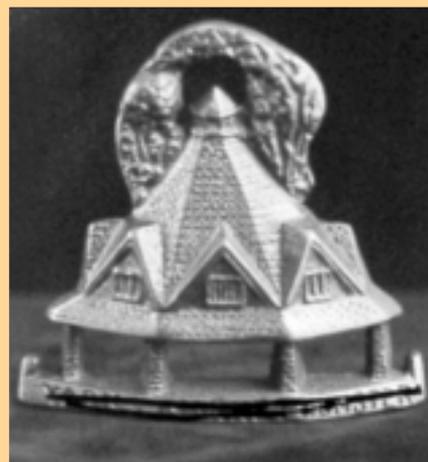
A less common version without the hanging hole is double sided (rather than hollow back) and is marked just above the worm REG on one side and 779768 indistinctly on the other.

The thistle is the emblem of Scotland.

25 July 1933

Registration number 785211

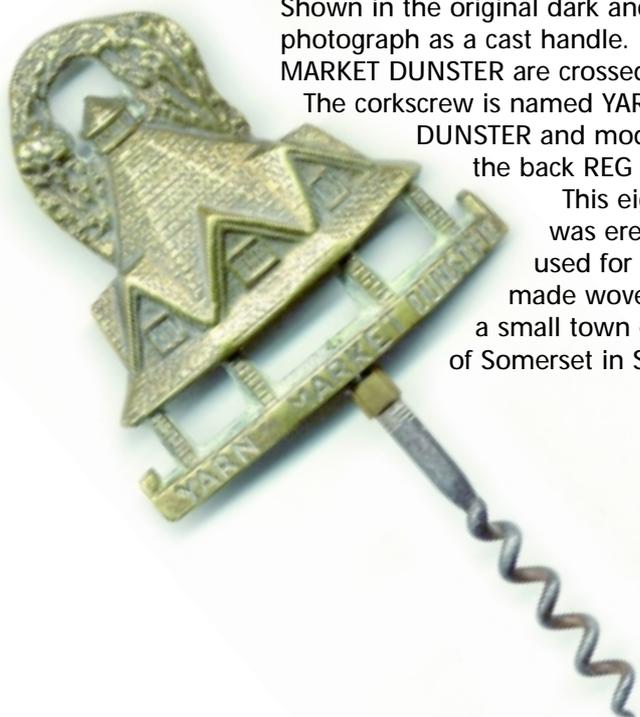
**Colin Edmonds Pascal (British Subject),
242, Maryvale Road, Bournville, Birmingham**



Shown in the original dark and out-of-focus photograph as a cast handle. The words YARN MARKET DUNSTER are crossed out.

The corkscrew is named YARN MARKET DUNSTER and moderately clearly on the back REG 785211.

This eight sided building was erected in 1609 and used for the sale of locally made woven cloth. Dunster is a small town on the North coast of Somerset in South West England.



*7 July 1938 Copyright extended
for second period of five years
18 October 1938 In pursuance
of an application received on the
7th September 1938 the address
and the address for service of
the proprietor altered to 58,
Beaks Hill Road, Kings Norton,
Birmingham 30
Copyright expired 25 July 1943*

9 March 1920

Registration number 675065

Pearson Page Co. Limited, Brass Founders,
Ileene Works, Sherlock Street, Birmingham



28 January 1925 Copyright extended for second period of 5 years

The original drawing shows a
toasting fork topped by a pixie
sitting on a toadstool under two
other tall toadstools. This design is
almost identical to registration
number 711007 which was drawn
as a corkscrew.

The corkscrew is not named but
marked clearly on the back R^D N^O
675065. There is also an indistinct
serial or catalogue number ??205.

The corkscrew was also made
as an eyebrow with sheath.



10 February 1925

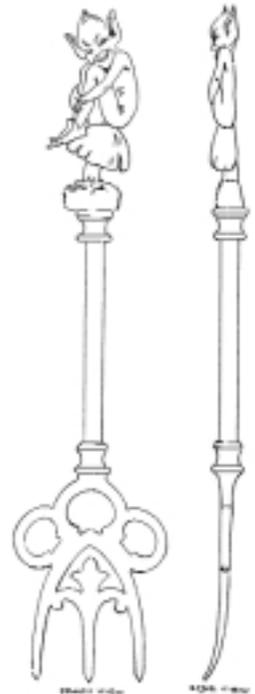
Registration number 711001

Pearson Page Co. Limited,
Ileene Works, Sherlock Street, Birmingham



The original drawing
shows a toasting fork
topped by a pixie with
its arms round its
knees sitting on a
toadstool. Different
styles of the corkscrew
are known, including
one with a sheath.

Left: DARTMOOR PIXIE marked
very indistinctly R^D 711001 - this
style also known named as
DEVON PIXIE, EXMOOR PIXIE
and HAYTOR PIXIE
Middle: CORNISH PIXIE flat
back clearly marked R^D 711001
Right: DEVON PIXIE marked
indistinctly R^D 711001



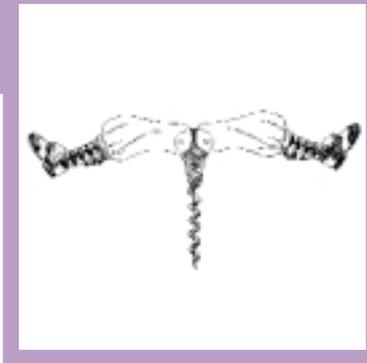
Copyright expired
10 Feb 1930.

06 August 1996

Registration number 2058316

Mark Holden

Trading as Universal Housewares
15 Reynolds Road, Chiswick, London W4 5AR



The box for the Rugby legs is marked the same as the Golfer etc. The Rugby legs design was not specifically registered but is derived from the Footballer 2061564.



Golfer legs

This modern version of the 1893 design for "Lady's Legs" is 80mm closed. It is marked above the worm *U.K. DES. REG PAT PEND.* The box is named "the Leg Pull" and "the Corkscrew with Character" and marked *UK Des Reg. No 2061565.*

06 August 1996

Registration number 2058317

Mark Holden

Trading as Universal Housewares
15 Reynolds Road, Chiswick, London W4 5AR



Bull Pull

135mm marked *Bull Pull*
The box is named *the Bull Pull*
The Ultimate Corkscrew. The design of this beautifully crafted corkscrew was inspired by the original "Empire Double-Lever" of 1890 (as patented by Heeley).

Hull

Registration details:

1871: Charles Hull, Birmingham

Charles Hull was the youngest son of a wealthy Dorset farmer. By 1851 at the age of 24, he had moved away from a rural existence to industrial Birmingham. He had become a corkscrew maker and was living at 101 Henry Street, the address of Cotterill's work premises. It can thus be assumed that he was working for Cotterill. Interestingly, Edwin Cotterill was visiting Charles and his sister on the day of the 1851 Census. This recorded visit was very significant, because they were probably discussing an interesting business arrangement. Charles was either related to Edwin or had shown himself to be a bright, astute employee. The discussions resulted in Charles Hull taking over Cotterill's corkscrew and steel toy business, allowing Cotterill to concentrate on his successful manufacture of locks and safes. Slater's 1852-1853 Directory shows a deal had been concluded. Edwin Cotterill was listed as "*patentee and manufacturer of the royal climax detector lock*" at 105 New Street and 101 Henry Street. Charles Hull was shown as "*(Successor to Edwin Cotterill), manufacturer of corkscrews, nut cracks, boot hooks, steel toys etc*" at 101 Henry Street. An 1854 advert confirms this, also stating that he was a "*Manufacturer of Patent and all kinds of Corkscrews. Proprietor of E. Cotterill's Patent Self-adjusting Corkscrew. An extensive Stock always on hand*".



From Shadler's Birmingham Directory 1854

The 1855 Birmingham Directory shows that Edwin Cotterill had moved away from Henry Street to 30 Upper Temple Street. Charles Hull is shown as a "*manufacturer of the patent corkscrew, champagne nippers, boot and button hooks and all kinds of steel toys, (established nearly a Century)*" at 100 Henry Street, Great Brook Street. The claim "*established nearly a Century*" must relate to the original Cotterill business. There is tenuous evidence to link Edwin Cotterill to Benjamin Cotterill, who was a corkscrew maker in Wolverhampton, and was listed in Sketchley's 1770 Directory.

An 1860 directory still shows Hull at Henry Street but also as a steel toy polisher at Cliveden Street.

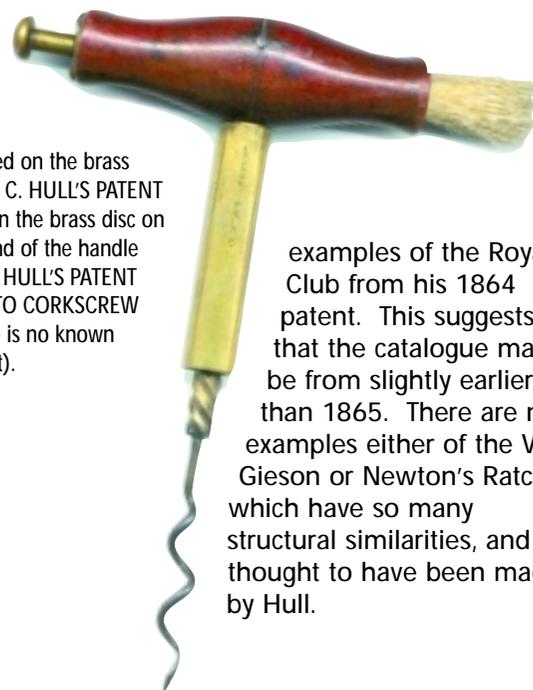


From Post Office Birmingham Directory 1860

In the 1861 Census, Charles Hull was listed as a Steel Toy Manufacturer, employing 10 men and 5 boys, living at 101 Henry Street with his family, two servants and an assistant. By 1863 the family had moved away from the business address to live at Albert Cottage, Washwood Heath.

HULL'S CATALOGUE

Charles Hull's trade catalogue, dated at about 1865, can be seen on the Revolutionary Players web site (see Bibliography) and shows a very wide range of corkscrews and other steel toys. It includes a variety of Thomasons and Kings Screws, Lund's Patent Rack and Lever, corkscrews with buttons and grips, folding bows, picnics, roundlets, peg and worms, and champagne taps. Two versions of Hull's Presto corkscrew are shown, but surprisingly there are no

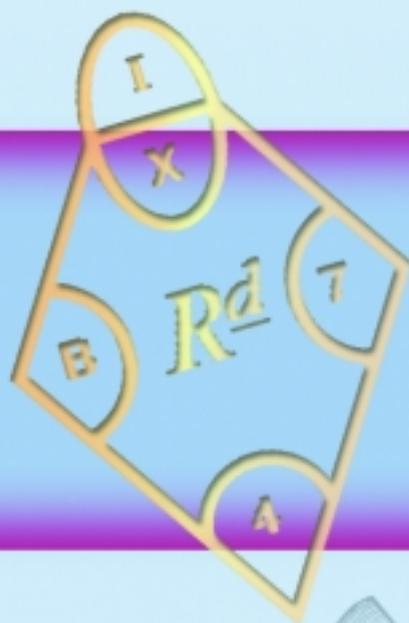


Marked on the brass shank C. HULL'S PATENT and on the brass disc on the end of the handle CHAS HULL'S PATENT PRESTO CORKSCREW (there is no known patent).

examples of the Royal Club from his 1864 patent. This suggests that the catalogue may be from slightly earlier than 1865. There are no examples either of the Van Gieson or Newton's Ratchet, which have so many structural similarities, and are thought to have been made by Hull.

Corkscrews:

British Registered Designs



Frank Ellis bought his first antique corkscrew in 1988 as birthday present for a friend. But his friend never got it and it became the first in a collection of over 3000 corkscrews. Frank's training as a research chemist gave him a fascination for the historical development of corkscrew designs as new materials were invented and then commercialised. With a collector's zeal and a flair for research he embarked on a ten year mission to discover as much as possible about British Registered Designs for Corkscrews. This book leads from Jones' first design in 1840, through the golden Victorian years, to the kitchen tools and cute animals of the 1930s up to the present day. A significant section charts the history of brass figural corkscrews, a truly British genre.

Without the support and help of his wife Barbara, the task would have taken much longer. Her background as a business analyst inspired her research into the family and business histories of the designers of corkscrews. These commercial and personal stories add human interest to the book.



ISBN 978-0-9555264-0-4