

American Bolt & Screw Case Co. Dayton, Ohio.

By Neil Searle

19th century meant fasteners could be mass produced quickly. Hardware stores at the turn of last century were tasked with stocking large quantities of metal fittings in an assortment of types and sizes. The American Bolt & Screw Case Co. of Dayton made wooden organizational cabinets that were new machinery and manufacturing techniques in the sold nationwide, but one design radically changed how bolts and screws were accessed.



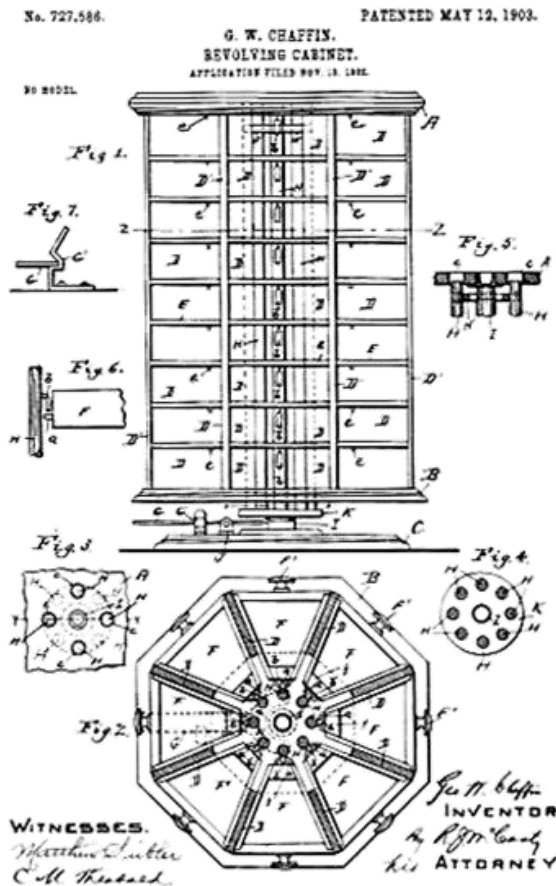
Fig. 1. This cabinet consists of 80 triangular drawers each with porcelain pull knobs, on a square base with additional 18 drawers. These used for larger carriage and tyre bolts, a total of 98 drawers.

Patented May 12, 1903, by George W. Chaffin, the octagonal cabinet featured wedge-shaped drawers on each of its faces and rotated around a central axis. Each drawer with white porcelain knobs was stenciled with numbers, corresponding with the measurements of the screws, bolts and nuts therein.



Fig.4. I possit that the wooden dowels on top of the cabinet that you can see in

the photo and also on my example were to facilitate turning the revolving cabinet.



Robert Chaffin, the father of George (patent) was for five years, president of the American Bolt and Screw Case Co. of Dayton, O., his goods being sent to every country on the globe.

Fig. 5. Patent No. 727,586.

This particular patent "relates to means for locking and unlocking the several rows of drawers through the operation of a single lever".

He did have a system of locking all the drawers.....

"This invention relates to improvements in revolving cabinets; and it consists of a frame of octagonal form or having eight sides, each of which contains a series of drawers. The cabinet is especially useful in hardware stores for keeping in a convenient manner a variety of hardware-fixtures. The invention relates to means for locking and unlocking the several rows of drawers through the operation of a single lever, all as is hereinafter more fully described."

In Fig.4. of the patent drawing you will see (Fig.7.) This relates to the drawer stop. My example has the hole above every drawer where this would have been fixed as it would have been an easy mistake to pull the drawer out completely and have the drawer and contents land on your foot.



Fig. 6. A selection of the type of bolts the cabinet would have held. Tyres were fastened to the wheels with nails, or tyre bolts. The metal tyres were drilled before being placed on the

Patented Aug. 18, 1874.

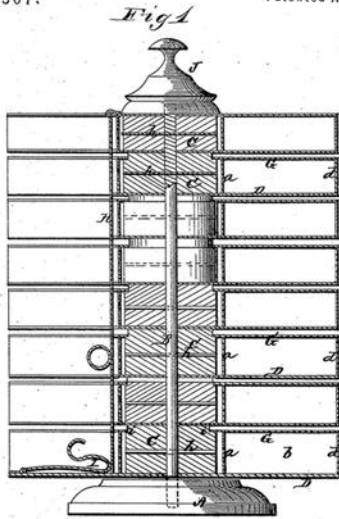


Fig.8. Westphal revolving cabinets were made of cast iron. These cabinets are very collectable, one very ornate example, sold at auction for USD \$23,809. They are said to be one of the rarest pieces of hardware store collectables in the market.