

PLUMB BOBS OF THE WORLD part 3 rest of the world

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www.plumbbobcollectors.info

Dear Fellow Collector,
Dear reader of the PLUMB BOB NEWS,
As always, I am searching for new material and information associated with plumb bobs.
Please feel free to share new photos, catalogs, articles or stories of a personal nature.
I welcome input from fellow collectors!
Wolf

PLUMB BOBS OF THE WORLD part 3 rest of the world

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In the last newsletter part 1 Europe I listed the shapes from GERMANY, AUSTRIA, SWITZERLAND, FRANCE, ITALY, ROMAN PLUMB BOBS, PORTUGAL, SPAIN, THE NETHERLANDS, BELGIUM, SCANDINAVIA, GREECE, BULGARIA, and POLAND

In part 2 THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CANADA AND SOUTH- AMERICA

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1. INTRODUCTION

My third and last part about the plumb bob shapes in the world contains the countries not mentioned before. Sure, England belongs to Europe – even when they don't agree always with the politic of the European Community.

For the "plumb bob history" I put England together with the (former) colonies in a special group.

England brought the tools into the colonies, but there already existed sometimes special plumb bob shapes or the people later modified the imported tools.



2. ENGLAND WITH THE COLONIES



The typical English plumb bob is ONION-SHAPED. See figure left. There exist a lot of variations as shown in the photos below from the collection of Dick Jones from Wales.





There are also a lot of very heavy bridge-builder plumb bobs.

Similar shape has the production of LMSD with very interesting huge plumb bobs. I think that they are made especially for collectors or ceremonial reason and not for workers. Material is wood or brass.



See column right top.



Often we find the shape ARROW THROUGH APPLE that means a rod through a ball / spherical.

More details about pbs from England, India, Australia, New Zealand and Canada you will find in my two newsletters 2010-04 +05.

Benefiting from its colonial past also appear very many bobs made from the material

IVORY. But beware! There have been many billiard balls from plastic left their "life" to be sold as an ivory-plumb bob. The difference between ivory and bone is not

visible directly for every collector immediately. In addition, there may be problems with the customs when selling/buying Ivory plumb bobs. This year similarly strict rules for trade in ivory will



"CUE BALL" IVORY PLUMB BOB UNITED KINGDOM

also be introduced in America, as here in Europe already exist.

Ivory plumb bobs from the collection Nelson Denny †



IVORY PLUMB BOB, "ROSE BUD" CAP  
UNITED KINGDOM

England has a big tradition in ship building. So we find a lot of plumb bobs used on the ship yards. E.g. the Laird Plumb Bob from the coll. of WAYNE ROBBINS



Some makers:

Edward Preston produced a lot of different shapes. See first page above and the iron pb right.



STANLEY produced his well know type 47 173 (below) in England and common steel plumb bobs (right)



Of interest may be collecting pbs marked with "A crown M" (Air Ministry) or "E arrow B" (military).

A small maker was Picador with two shapes. I had contact to the owner some years ago. Picador does not longer produce plumb bobs.



Richard Kell is producing very nice plumb bob in a container.



Similar plumb bobs are offered on eBay in the last time made from material of war ships.



Let's go to **AUSTRALIA**.

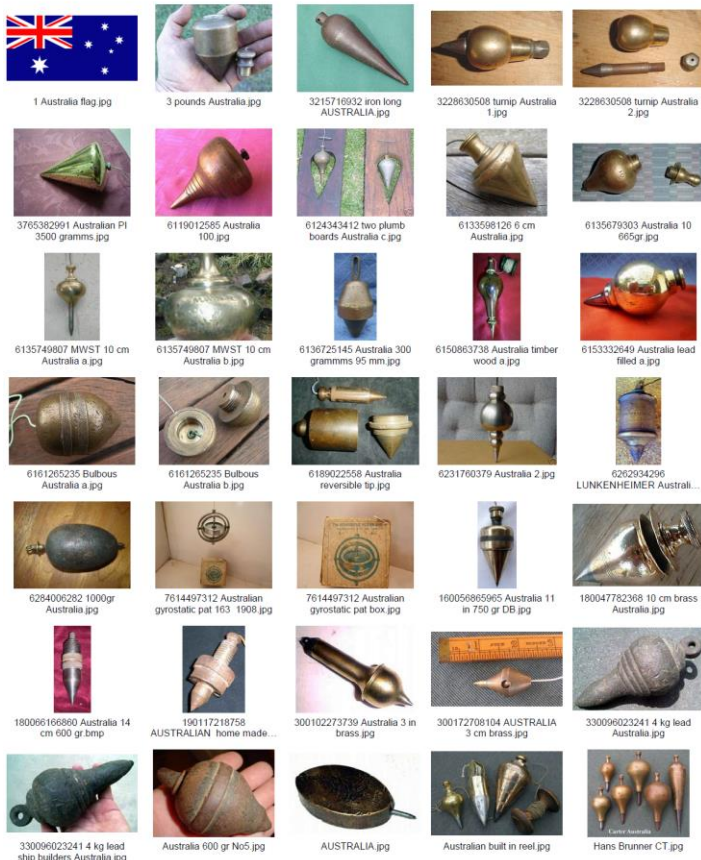
There we know some makers like PAUL CALL, Sydney, CARTER TOOLS CT, PHI, TELSTER, ESDAILE etc.

The German make Gampper produced a lot of plumb bobs for the dealers BOKER, FHP, KAUFMANN, BODMANN who shipped to Australia.

The typical Australian shape is shown by the brass plumb bob of Carter tools CT below left.



Below an overview of plumb bobs offered from Australia on EBAY.



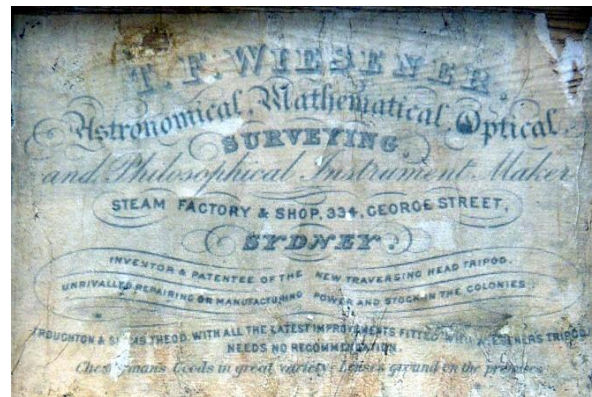
[plumbbobwolf@t-online.de](mailto:plumbbobwolf@t-online.de)

I found two very interesting and single patented plumb bobs “down under”:

CARTERS PAT 1908 GB190800163A a gyrostatic plumb bob with self-rotation. Unfortunately it does not work as the inventor wanted. ☹ Nelson Denny† bought it from AUS.



Wiesener, immigrated from Germany, got the patent GB190719687A 1907 for his pb.



## NEW ZEALAND

The only known maker is W & T. Marshall FOUNDRY CHRISTCHURCH NZ with marking ChCh.

This pb was sold on EBAY for \$232.

Unfortunately my friend Arthur Peters who lives nearby of the former factory could not get any information about the Marshall foundry.



In INDIA and Burma we find beside the English shapes the following local plumb bobs from iron and brass.



[plumbbobwolf@t-online.de](mailto:plumbbobwolf@t-online.de)

## CANADA

Well known over there is the dealer HERCULES with a simple cylindrical shape with a lot of knurling. It is not only produced in Canada.



Even nowadays are produce three different patented plumb bobs by the maker/dealer VERITAS or LEE VALLEY.



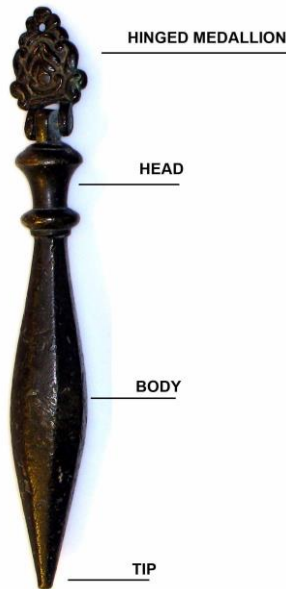
### 3. TURKEY (OTTOMANS)



Visiting my friend Dogan Basak in 2006 in Istanbul/Turkey we put his complete collection on the floor and made a system of 6 main shapes for the Ottoman plumb bobs. The Ottoman Empire was not only today's Turkey but ranged in the west from Vienna, Austria to Iraq in the east and south to the African coast of the Mediterranean Sea. See map right.



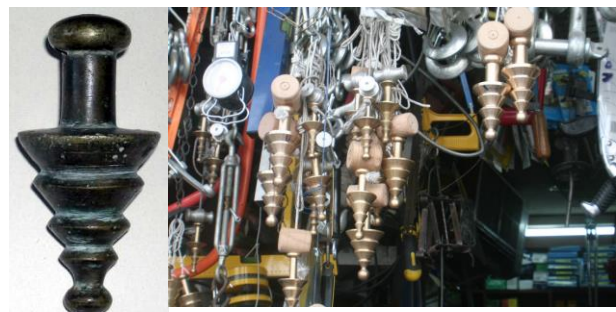
**Type 1** is a slim plumb bob of brass, produced as single piece so that each piece looks different. At the top it has a (decorated) holder, which is designed like a hinge. Below a poster that Dogan Basak printed with some beautiful pieces of his collection:



**Type 2** looks like a top and is still nowadays sold a similar form.



**Type 3** looks similar and has a spherical "tip". With other variations we know it mainly from Syria and Israel. Pictures from the coll. of Jean-Paul Michel†, Dogan Basak, Riccardo Chetoni and Wolf Ruecker.



**Type 4** is a truncated cone shape with a big head. These are mainly flat bottom pbs of iron. Very few are from brass.

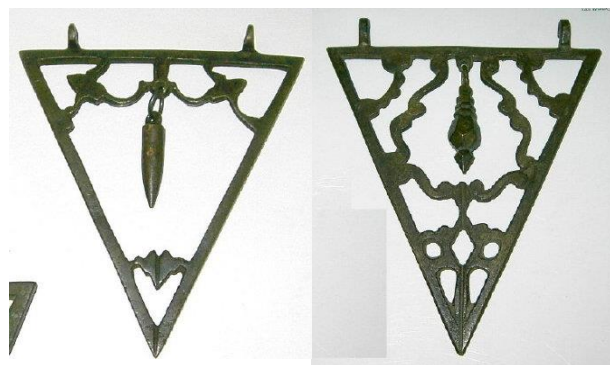
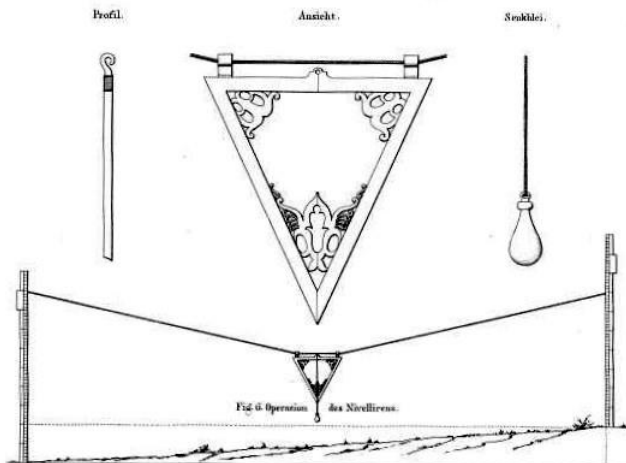
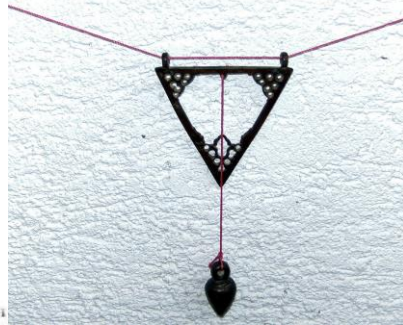


Also these triangle plumb bobs were produced as individual pieces, so that we have not two exactly similar pieces, with the exception of one form (pictured right), which was mass-produced recently.



**Type 5** is for me the most interesting from this region: A triangular plumb, which is suspended from a horizontal line with two hooks. In the middle is still hanging a small plumb bob to show the verticality. It was used especially in the construction of water pipes. I have reports of water engineers (General Andreossy 1828), who supplied Istanbul with water from the surrounding mountains.

See my Newsletter 2009-08 Ottoman plumb bobs.



The **Type 6** is a common pointed cone plumb bob, which also in other regions is found very often.



4. **RUSSIA** 

In Russia and the neighboring countries I found no special shapes. The creativity and the quality are very limited.



These two patented plumb bobs are of interest for collectors:



As equipment for surveyor's tripods are offered small double plumb bobs from the Russian Army in a Bakelite container. They are based on German patents. See book page below.



A very nice Russian architect plumb bob I got from Bulgaria. The bob has a protection cap with a well-made Russian coat of arms.





5. ASIA (CHINA) 

Years ago I had good contact to dealers in Beijing the capital of China. So I could determine the shape in the different times.

China 1

- Mingh dynasty = 1368-1644
- Qing dynasty = 1644-1911
- Republic of China = 1911-1949
- Volksrepublik China (Abtrenn. Taiwan) = 1949-



China 2



Form verwendet in  
Republic of China 1911-1949  
und Volksrepublik China 1949 -



“moderne” Form  
heute

In the last time a dealer from Japan is offering on eBay a lot of brass plumb bobs. I think they are from China. A few of these offers seems to me a reproductions. China and Japan has the same source/history for their tools and technic.

In our hardware stores and supermarkets we can buy a lot of different shapes produced in China, Taiwan or other Asian countries. See ad page from the www below.



From Afghanistan I have some brass bobs. The one (right top) could also be an abused scale weight.

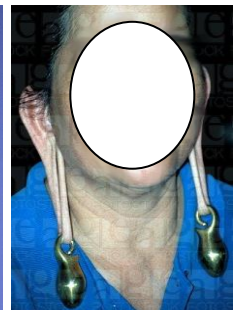
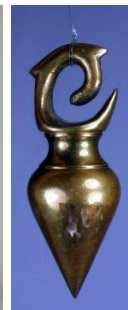


The iron plumb bob right comes from Uzbekistan.

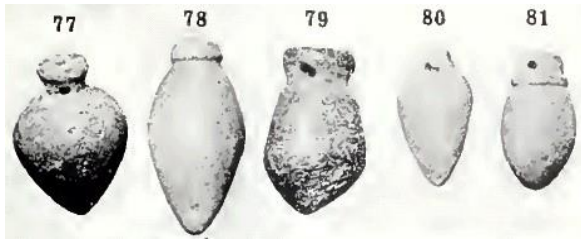


Lot Freiburg 5 (Uzbekistan)

Definitely NO PLUMB BOB is this often on eBay offered EAR RING from Cambodia or Malaysia.



## 6. EGYPT



From this country we know only a few old plumb bobs offered in the museum in Cairo. I published a newsletter 2010-02 about plumb bobs in Egyptian scales.



Figure right: Egyptian per. Alessandrino Tolemaico 332-23 BC

The plumb bobs / plummets in the ancient Egypt were used in measuring instruments, A-levels and scales



## 7. SOMETHING TO SMILE ABOUT

In a souvenir shop recently I found special cups for plumb bob collectors. You see, not everything is plumb. ☺



I searched for a similar cup for the city of our next International Plumb Bob Collectors Meeting, PISA, Italy. Here it is!

Don't forget: June 14, - 17, 2014 we are in PISA

## 8. REMARK

DEAR READER OF THE PLUMB BOB NEWS, DEAR FELLOW COLLECTOR,

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Remarks and contact by email: [plumbbobwolf@t-online.de](mailto:plumbbobwolf@t-online.de)

Enjoy it

Wolf Ruecker



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For us THE WORLD TURNS  
AROUND THE PLUMB BOB