

Still As Rare As A Pouch Clip*!

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Despite finding a few new examples, pouch clips remain rare and mostly American.

Why an update?

From the e-mails I received after the original article was published in the Gazette [1], I realised I was responsible for collectors looking at their pouches in a whole new light. With all this attention on the modest pouch clip, I wondered if my original conclusion: “From the 1950’s pouches with leather-covered clips for both mini and standard size pocket slide rules appear a particular favourite of the American market” would subsequently get shot down?

Whether you like or despise on-line auctions such as eBay®, it has created, alongside Herman van Herwijnen’s Archive [2], a valuable source of images. Sadly, I now regularly browse eBay® for images of pouch clips. Fortunately, my premise still stands. However, colour inconsistencies between identical pouches do crop up but without examining such examples first-hand, it is impossible to know if the differences are because of natural ageing or the manufacturer using a fresh batch of raw material. Either way, only two variations of merit and one new type of pouch clip have surfaced so far.

New examples

The first variation is a previously unreported style of a Keuffel & Esser “dirty orange” pouch clip. Interestingly, the style did appear in the original article but as an example from POST - perhaps suggesting a degree of cooperation between K&E and POST or a common supplier?



Fig. 1: “K+E” gold lettering replacing the embossed POST logo and text

The second variation is a previously unreported style from the most common manufacturer of pouch clips; Pickett & Eckel. It is unlike any other leather-covered pouch clip so far reported. The accompanying sheet metal rule, MODEL 21 – REAL ESTATE COSTIMATOR, has the “look and feel” of a Pickett budget series. The Pickett logo is a “Type 3” [3], used by Pickett throughout the 1950’s. The “DEVELOPED BY W. BRUCE TERRELL” footnote on the front of the rule gives the copyright year as 1956 – a MODEL 22 variation of the same rule gives a copyright date of MCMLVII or 1957. The pouch is made of a composite material (possibly cardboard with a cloth backing). Having been cut out as a single piece, it was simply folded in half and machine stitched along the open side and the bottom of the pouch.



Fig. 2: 1956 12.5cm Pickett Model 21

* Derived from the saying: “As scarce as hens’ teeth”

The new type of pouch clip I recently bought on eBay®. It is from a previously unreported European manufacturer, UTO. Started in 1957, this Danish manufacturer was a prolific producer of slide rules and is renowned for many of their models carrying no makers name or notation. The company was sold in 1980 but one of the original co-owners, Larsen, was a very skilled engineer.



Fig. 3: UTO 5inch No. 601

The leather pouches would have been ordered from a local Danish leather supplier [4]. Like other European manufactures, UTO pouches came, as standard, without clips. The “DACO METAL PRODUCTS – SAN LEANDRO” accreditation photo-etched in the back of the plastic rule and added in gold lettering to the back of the pouch, is conclusive provenance that this model 601 (K A = B C I C = D L) slide rule was a special commission for an American customer in California. The one-piece clip (tension legs running along the inside seams) looks like an oversized cursor spring and was almost certainly made by Larsen. The gold-coloured metal wire is very similar to what UTO used (rolled out) to make their cursor springs. The distinctive looking clips would have been added for a fee to the pouches as a special order. So watch out for them as they are extremely rare.

“Clasp” any opportunity!

Pouch clips, especially from European manufactures, are particularly rare. So the next time you see a tired looking slide rule in a flea market, do not forget to check if the pouch has a metal clip!

Acknowledgements (listed alphabetically):

- **Peter Hopp:** for pointing out the K&E and Pickett variations,
- **John Kwint:** for information on the UTO pouch clip.

References

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2. Herman van Herwijnen’s Archive - <http://sliderules.lovett.com/herman/begin.html>
3. Roger Shepherd: “Pickett Metal Slide Rules”, JOS, Vol. 1, No. 1, February, ISSN 1061-6292, USD 12.00, 1992 Pg 5,
4. Private correspondence with John Kwint, 2007.