

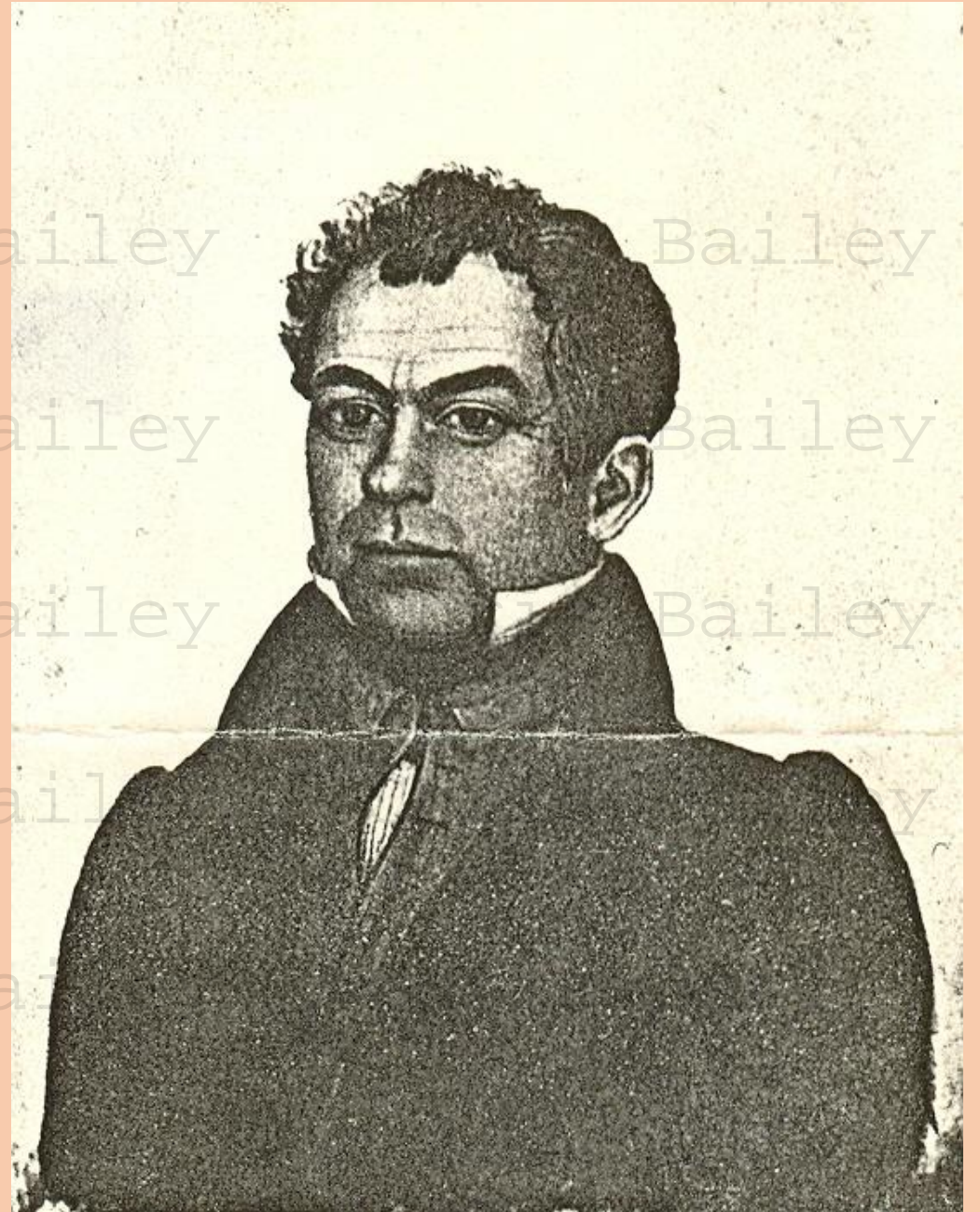
**The Rise and Fall of**

**Chauncey Jerome**

by Chris Bailey

Chauncey Jerome,  
son of Lyman and Sarah  
(Noble) Jerome, born June  
10, 1793 at Canaan, CT.

His father moved the family  
30 miles southeast to  
Plymouth, CT when he was  
age four. He was only age 10  
when his father died and was  
apprenticed in 1806 as a  
house carpenter.



Chris Bailey Chris Bailey Chris Bailey  
Chris Bailey Chris Bailey Chris Bailey  
**The Early Years**  
Chris Bailey Chris Bailey Chris Bailey  
**1816-1825**  
Chris Bailey Chris Bailey Chris Bailey  
Chris Bailey Chris Bailey Chris Bailey



“ I went to work for Mr. Terry .  
.. in the winter of 1816 ... he  
drew up a new plan for the  
Pillar Scroll Top Case with great  
improvements over the one Mr.  
Thomas was making [left] ... I  
made the first one of the new  
style . . .

The “new style” case Chauncey Jerome began producing in Eli Terry’s factory in 1816. Jerome stated Terry and Thomas first made 6,000 a year, but increased to 10,000 to 12,000 a year, originally selling at \$15.00 and each man had clearing about \$100,000 by 1825. That was millions in today’s money!





The success of Bristol, Conn. as a great clock manufacturing town was largely due to merchant George Mitchell (1774-1852) who brought Ephraim Downs to town to make him wooden gear clock movements, Chauncey Jerome to make Pillar & Scroll cases and Elias Ingraham to make Empire-style cases.



Jerome recorded in his autobiography:  
[1823] “I went to Chauncey Boardman,  
who had formerly made the old fashioned  
hang-up movements . . . I had him make  
me two hundred . . . altered and made as to  
take a case about four feet long, which I  
made out of pine, richly stained and  
varnished. This made a good clock for  
time and suited farmers first rate.”

Chris Bailey Chris Bailey Chris Bailey

# **The Wooden Movement**

## **Shelf Clock Era**

**1825-1834**

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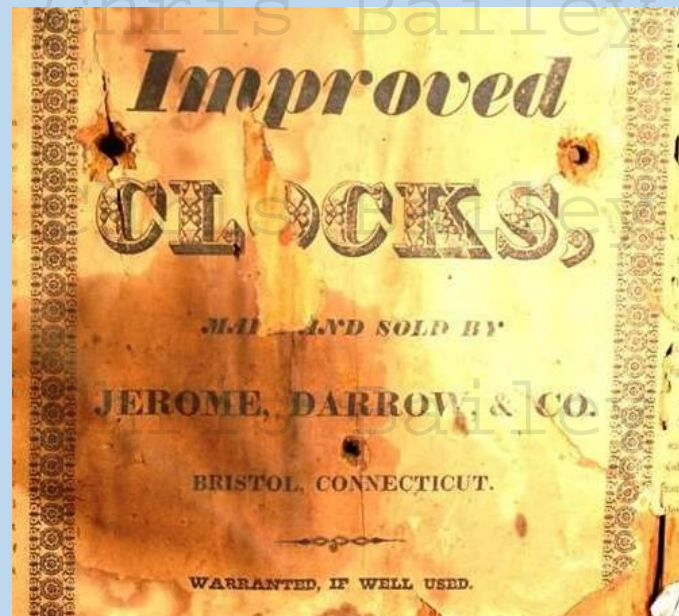


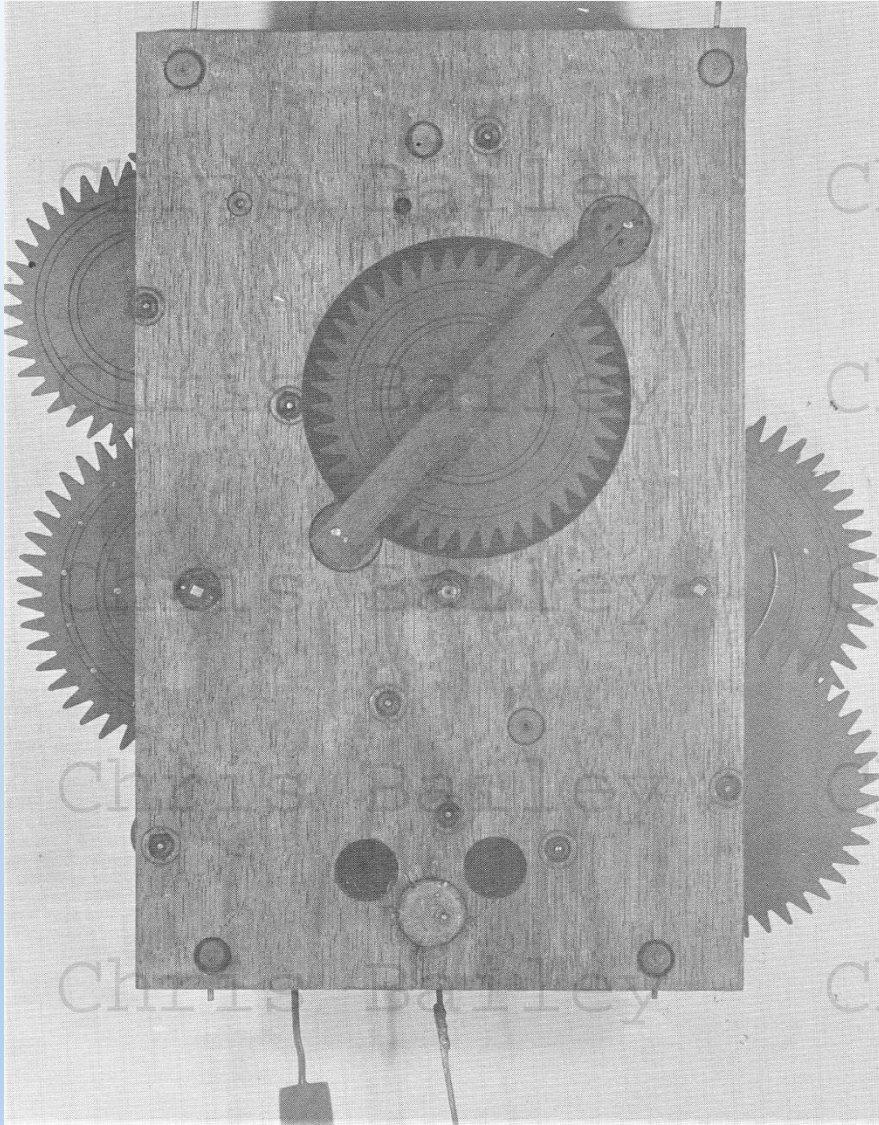


Jerome first produced Chauncey Boardman's shelf clock movement which had been developed from a tall clock wooden gear movement. It's design did not infringe on Eli Terry's shelf clock patent.

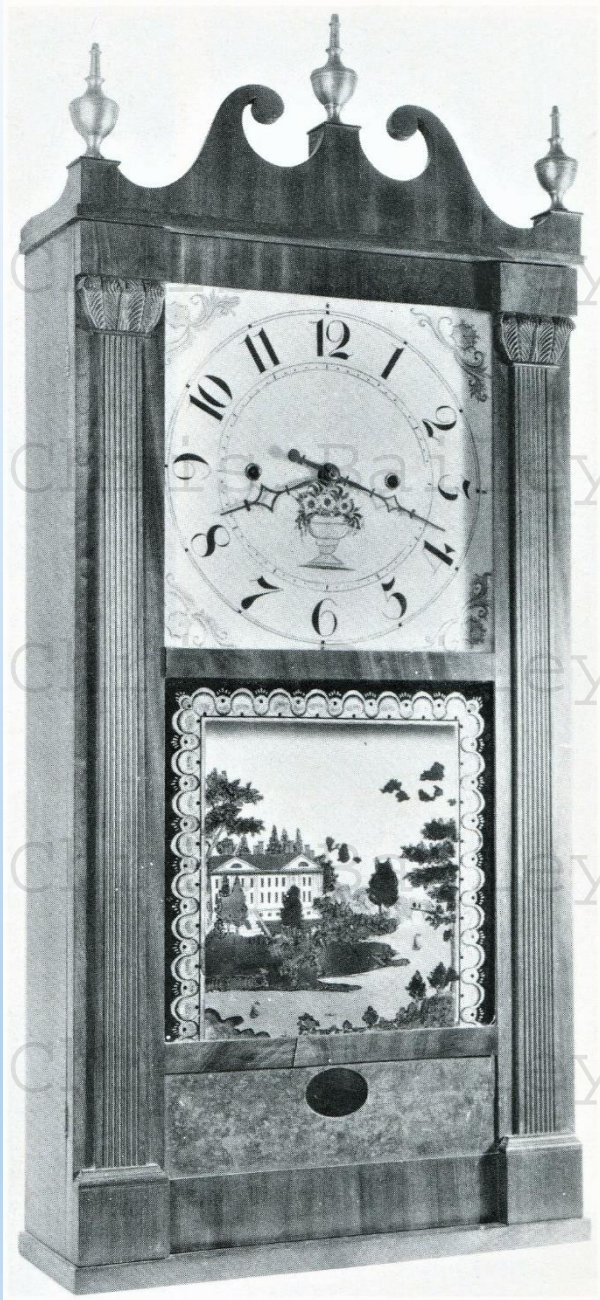


1825 – Jerome introduced the “bronzed looking glass clock in partnership with brother Noble Jerome & Elijah Darrow, decorator.





Chauncey's younger brother, Noble Jerome (1800-1861), designed a new wood movement about 1827 for the "bronzed looking glass" clock, but it proved impractical. After Boardman-style and Terry-style movements were used.



Although Jeromes & Darrow made very few pillar & scroll clocks, they produced a large variety of case styles, some with scrolls. Other cases they produced had newer stenciled or carved features or a mixture of styles. This scroll top model by Jerome, Darrow & Co., c. 1825, has fluted columns with carved capitals.



Jerome's "Bronzed Looking Glass" clock became the major production type of the late 1820s, 1830s and into the 1840s. Literally tens of thousands were produced with mirrors or reverse painted glasses. Early ones had the columns on the sash, but after 1830 most had stationary columns and front opening door.



Jerome &  
Darrow  
Jester-top 30-  
hour wood,  
c. 1830 ◀

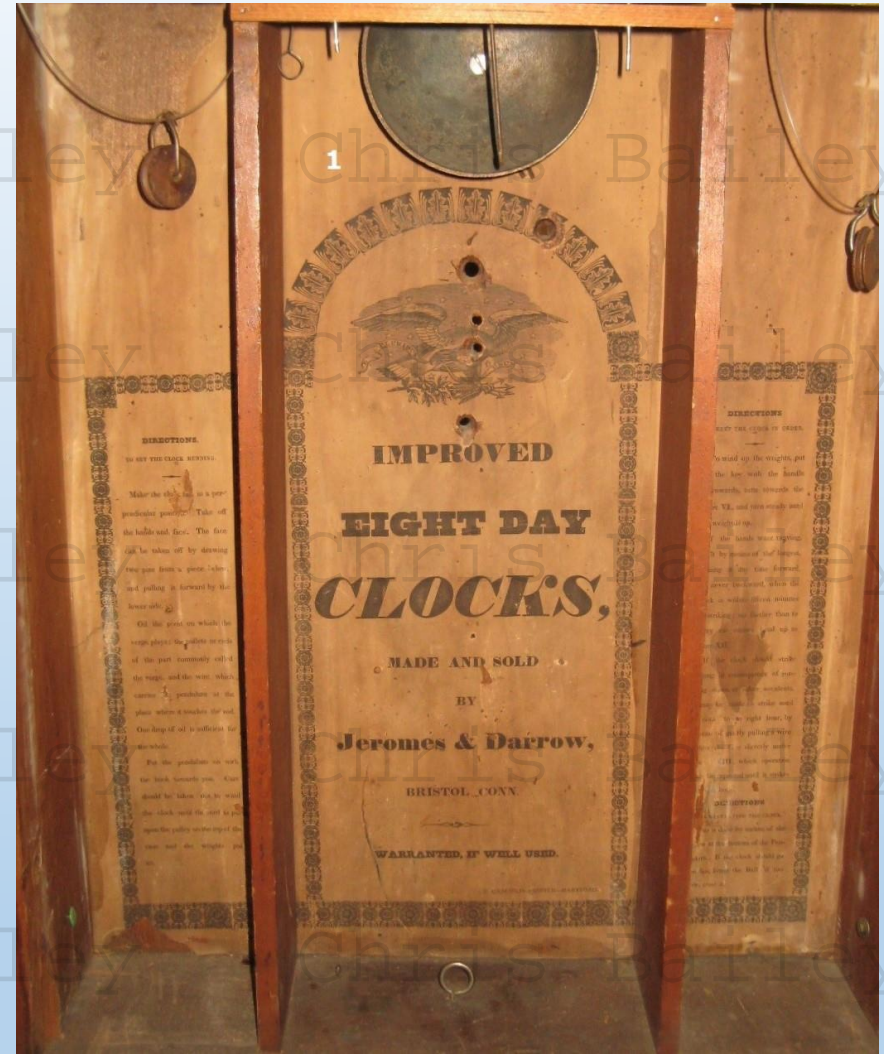
Miniature  
carved case  
30-hour alarm  
timepiece,  
c. 1830 ▶



JEROMES AND DARROW MINIATURE CARVED CASE ALARM TIMEPIECE WITH 30 HOUR WOOD WORKS TIME ONLY ALARM MOVEMENT, CA. 1831.



Jerome & Darrow 8-day wood clock production began about 1830.





Jeromes & Darrow  
wooden gear  
movements.

◀ 30-hour  
8-day ▶

Note the size of the  
winding barrels.





Chris Bailey Chris Bailey Chris Bailey

**Expanding Production:**

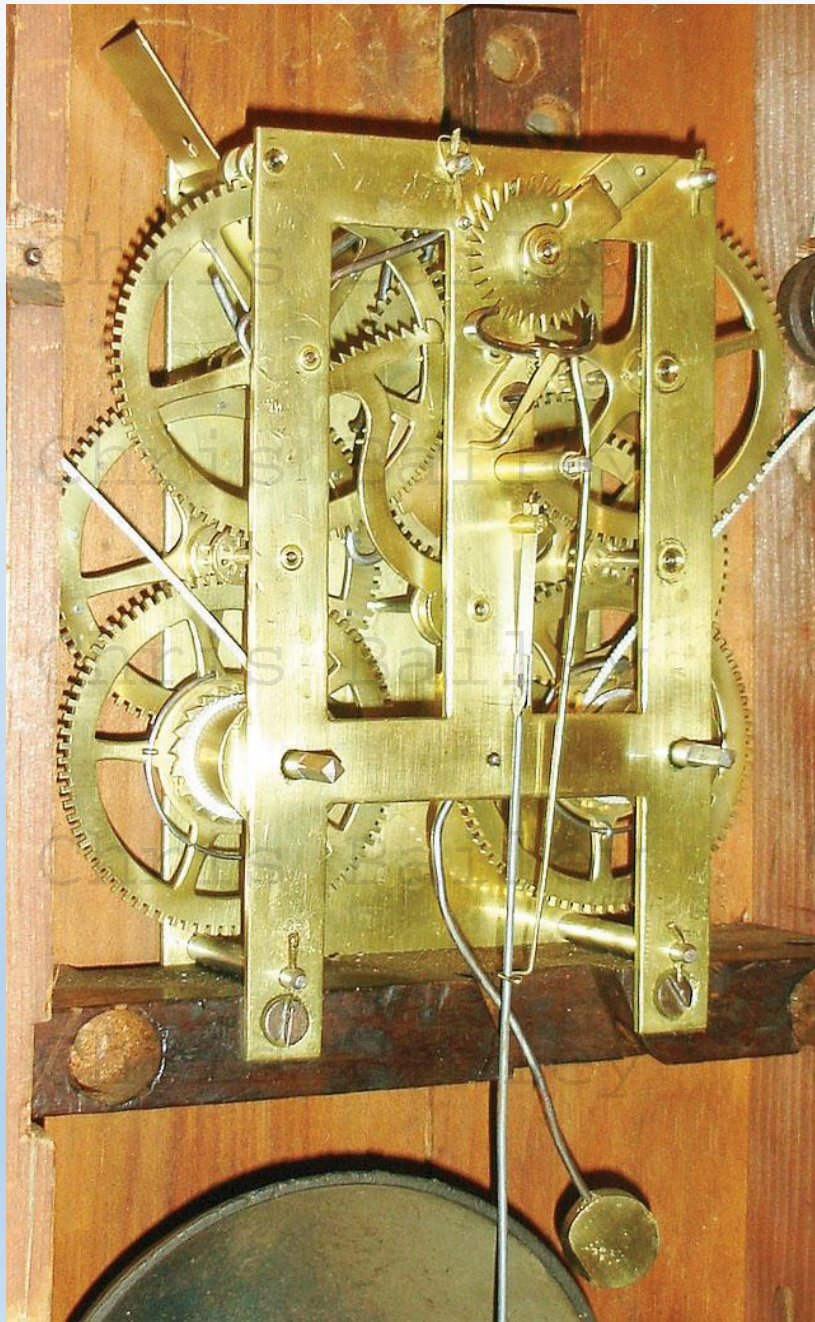
**8-day Brass Shelf Clocks**

**1834-1837**

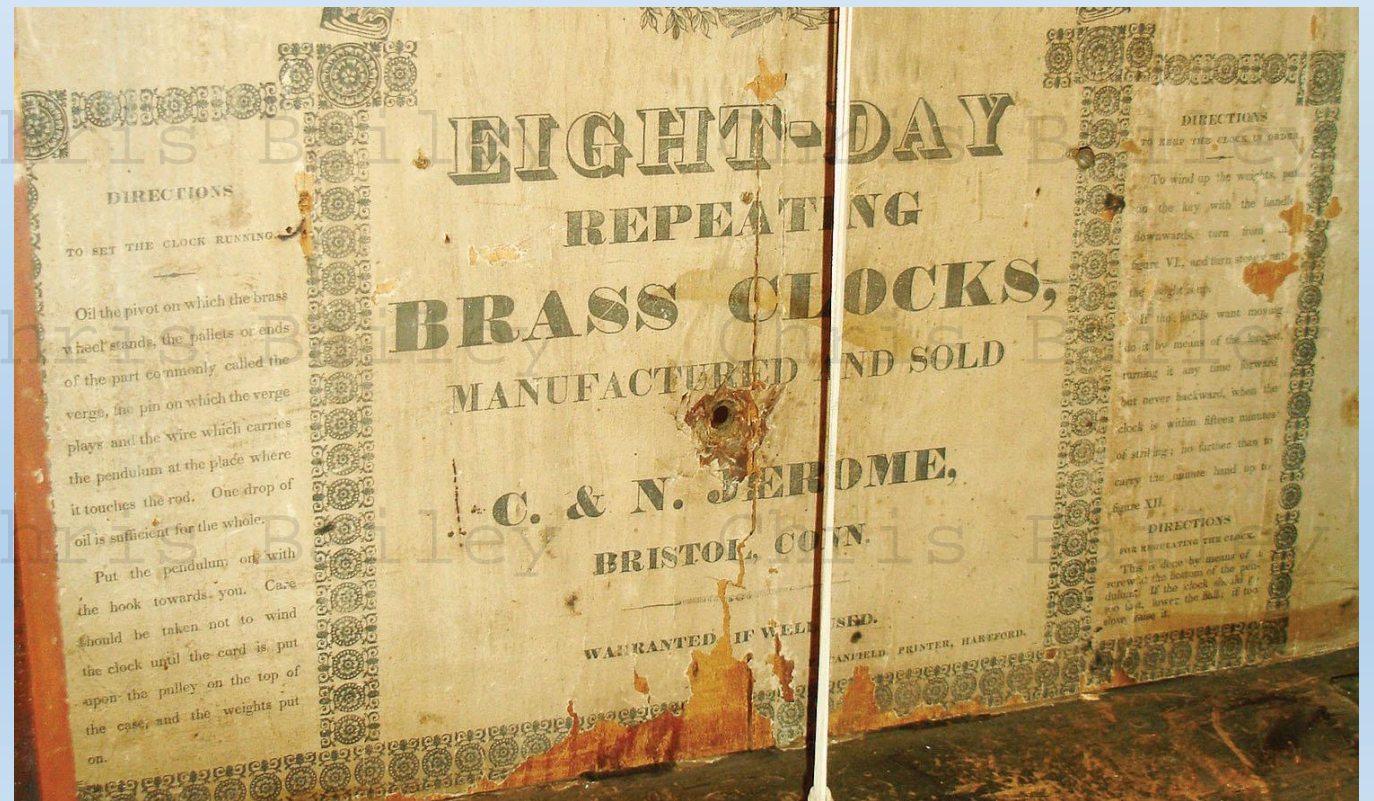
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C. & N. Jerome 8-day brass rack & snail striking movement in huge Empire-style case with painted wood advertising panel dated 1835.





Jerome's rack & snail 8-day movements are found in various large Empire-style cases.



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# **Southern Expansion**

## **1835-1837**

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Chris Bailey Chris Bailey Chris Bailey



# CLOCK FACTORY.

Having established ourselves in the Manufacture of Clocks in the City of Richmond, we are prepared to offer to the public various kinds of Clocks, all of which we warrant to keep good time. Any person wishing to obtain a good clock, and also to encourage Southern Manufacture, will be furnished by us, or our agents, on the most reasonable terms. And should any Clock fail to perform according to the recommendation given, we pledge ourselves to make it good by putting the same in order, or exchanging it for one that is good, as we are determined that the public shall not be imposed upon by a spurious article.

Any information respecting Clocks, will be received through the Richmond Post Office, or at our Factory, near B. & S. Jones' Tavern, on Shockoe Hill, City of Richmond, and Commonwealth of Virginia.

**C. JEROME & CO.**

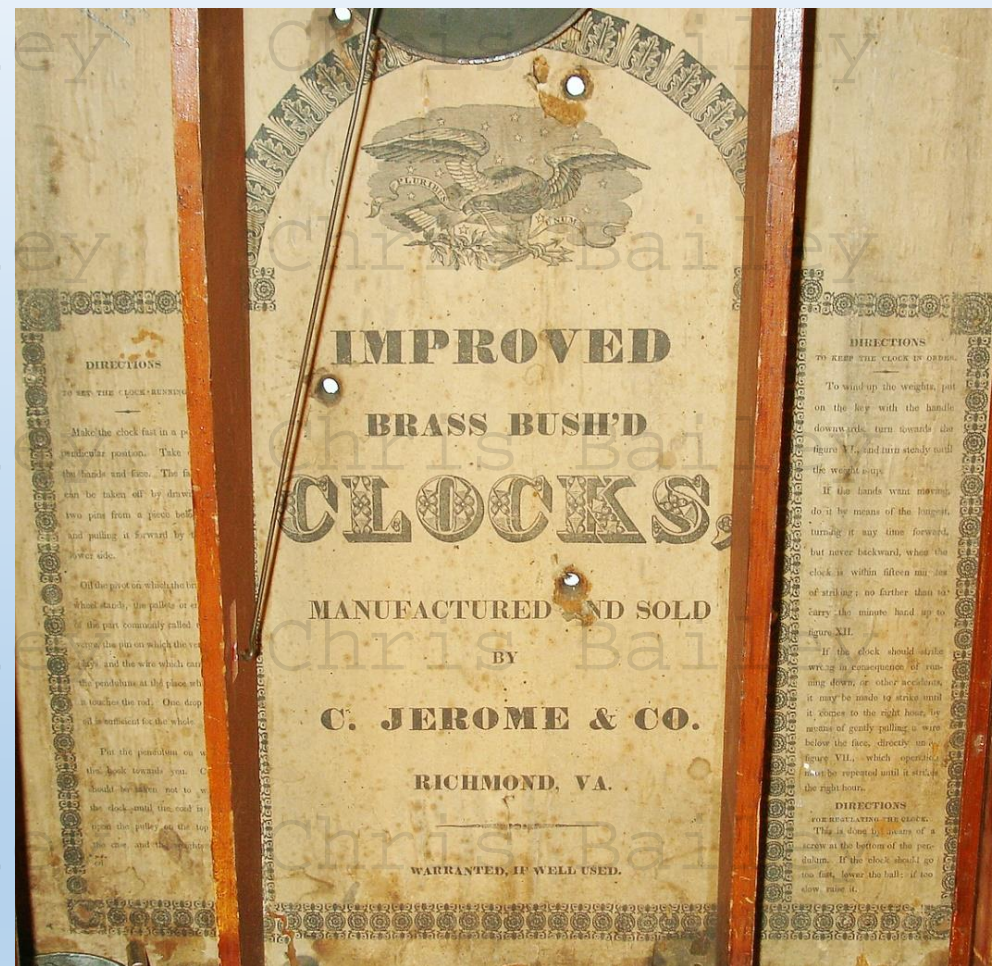
**October 1, 1835.**

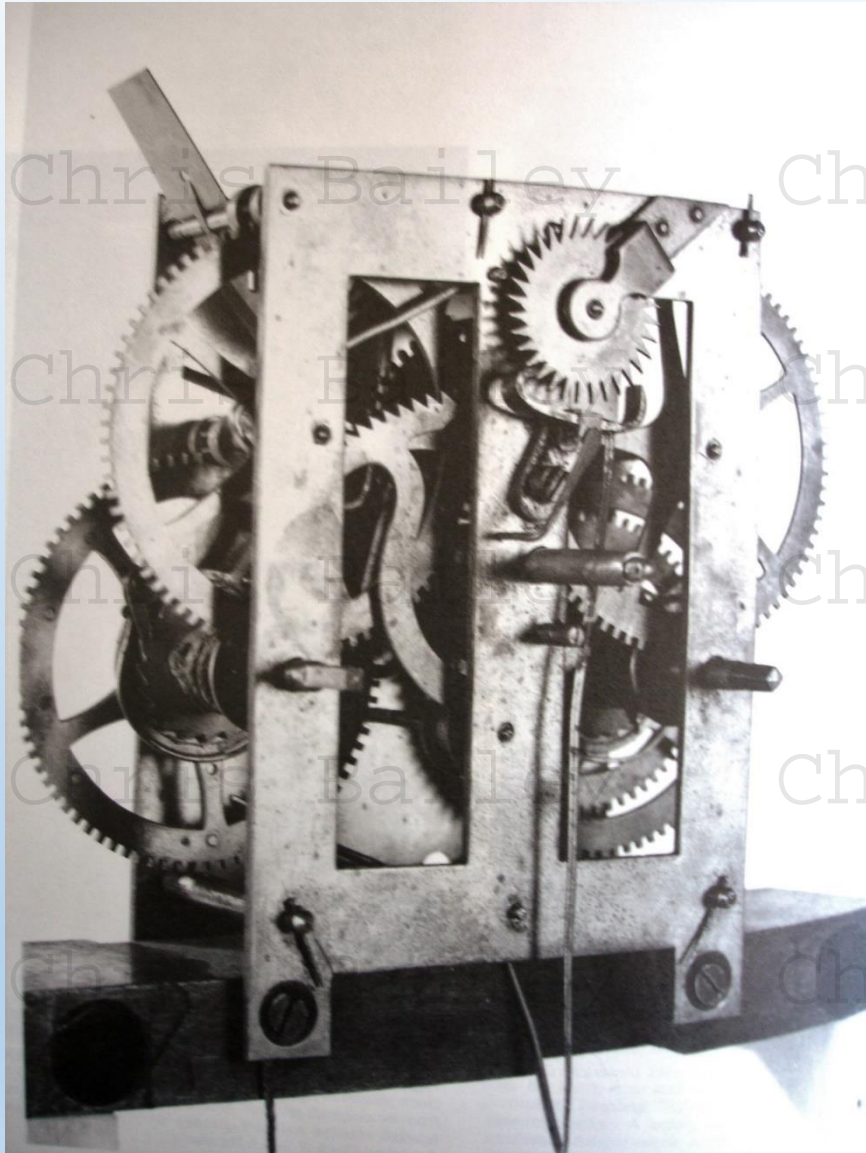
T. W. WHITE, Printer.

In 1835 the C. & N. Jerome established a “factory” at Richmond, Virginia in order to avoid taxes on Yankee-made goods. There they assembled parts that had been manufactured in Bristol. Locally printed labels were installed claiming the clocks were made in Virginia. Residents were not allowed in to see the operation, but were convinced local production was taking place.



A 30-hour *brass bushed* wood movement clock in a Richmond, Va. labeled case, c. 1835. 8-day brass movement clocks were assembled at Richmond.





A few 30-hour brass rack & snail movements were assembled and sold at Richmond about 1836. The idea of producing a cheaper a 1-day brass movement clock was on the radar.

Chris Bailey

Chris Bailey

Chris Bailey

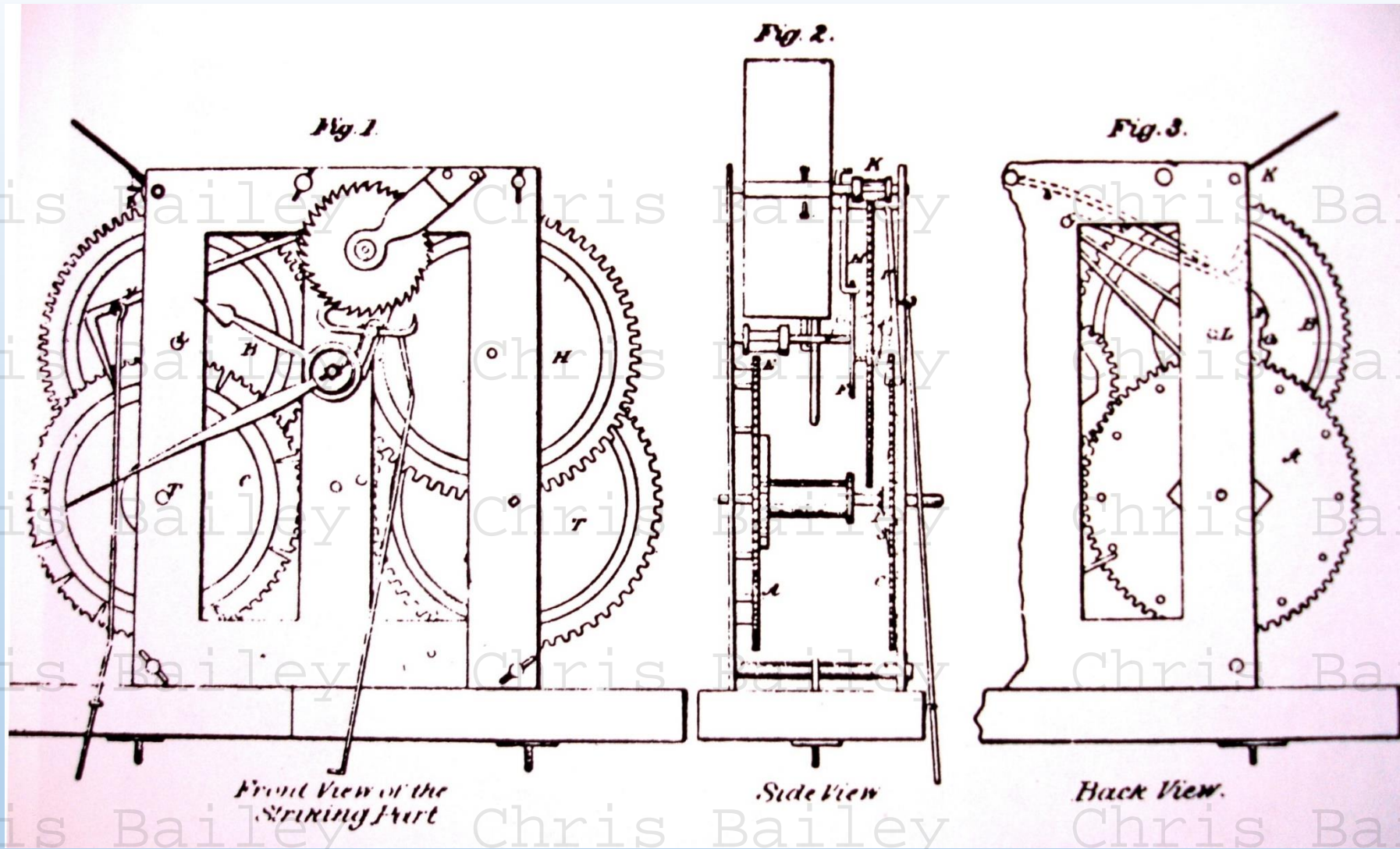
# **The 1-day Brass Movement and OG Shelf Clock 1839**

Chris Bailey

Chris Bailey

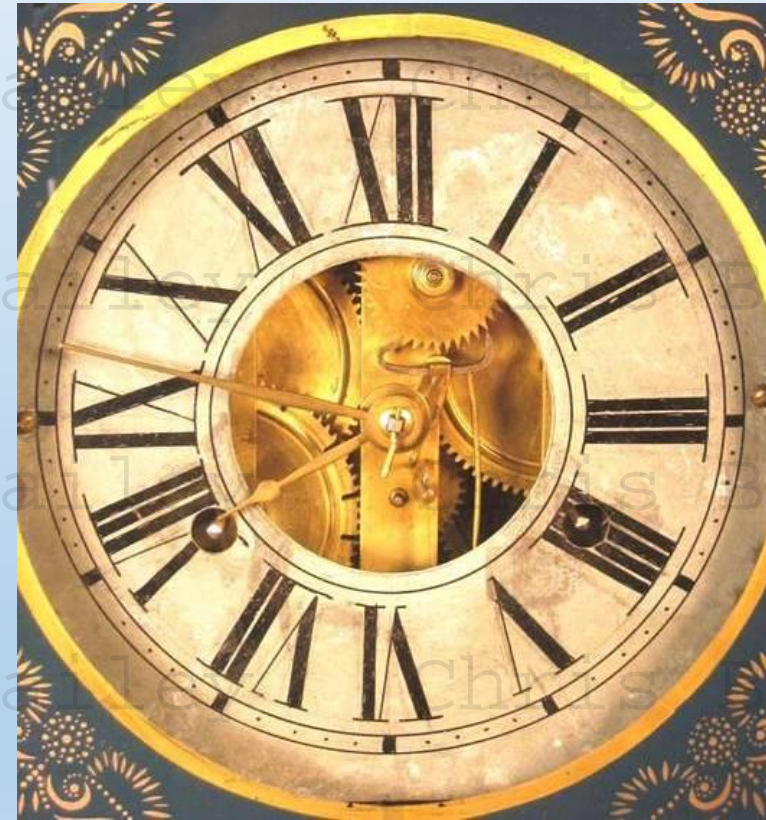
Chris Bailey





Noble Jerome's 1839 movement patent

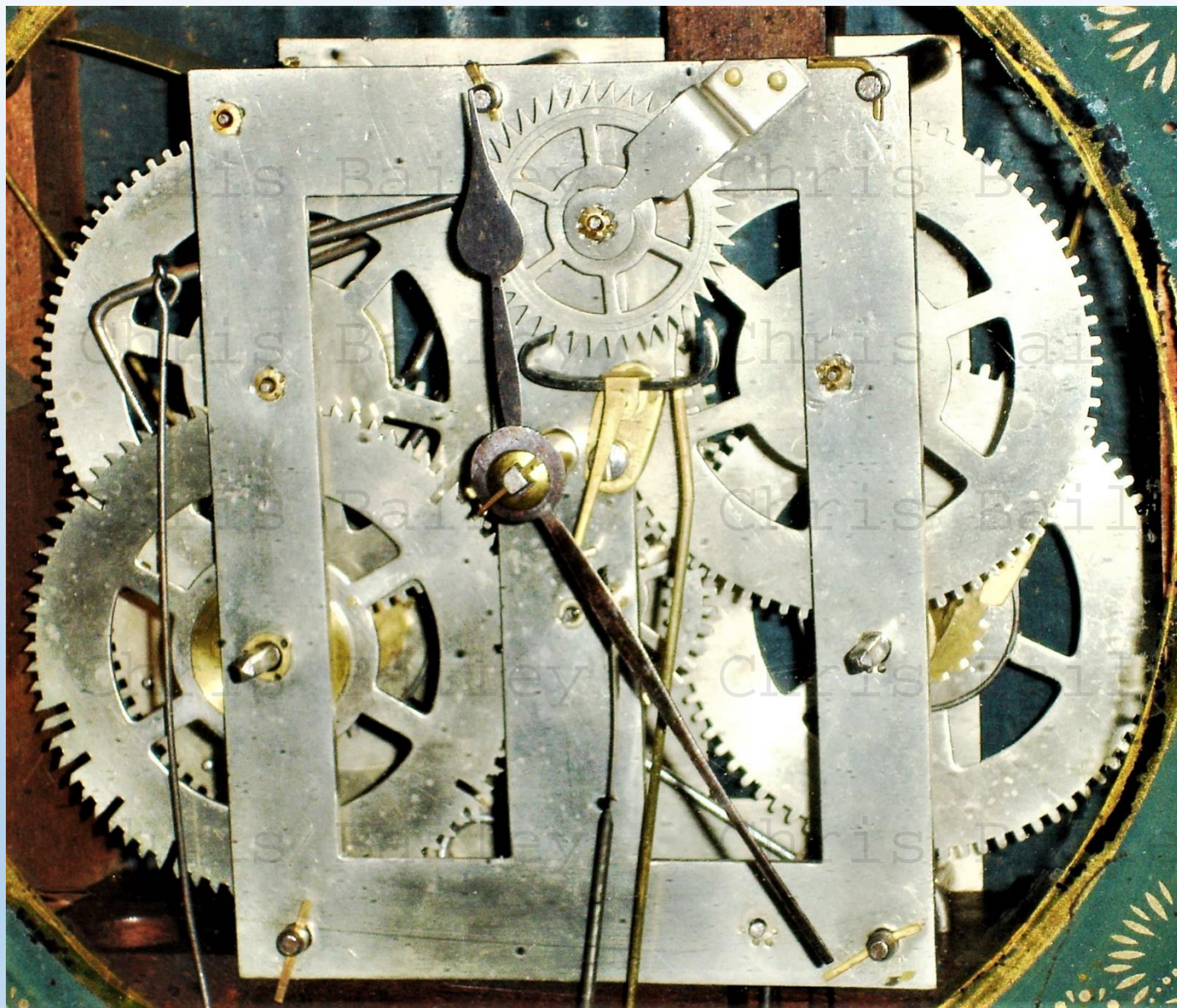
Noble Jerome's 1839 patent "cheap 30-hour brass" movement in the earliest production case.

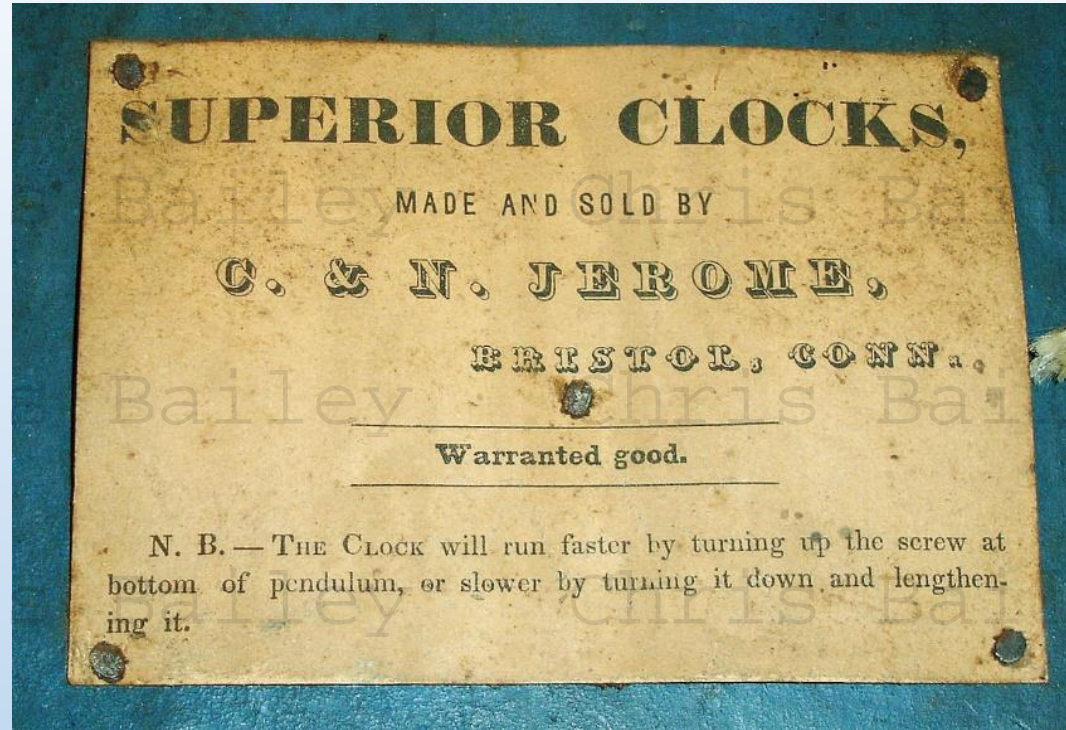






C. & N. Jerome produced a few 30-hour shelf clocks with German Silver movements. These are extremely rare.

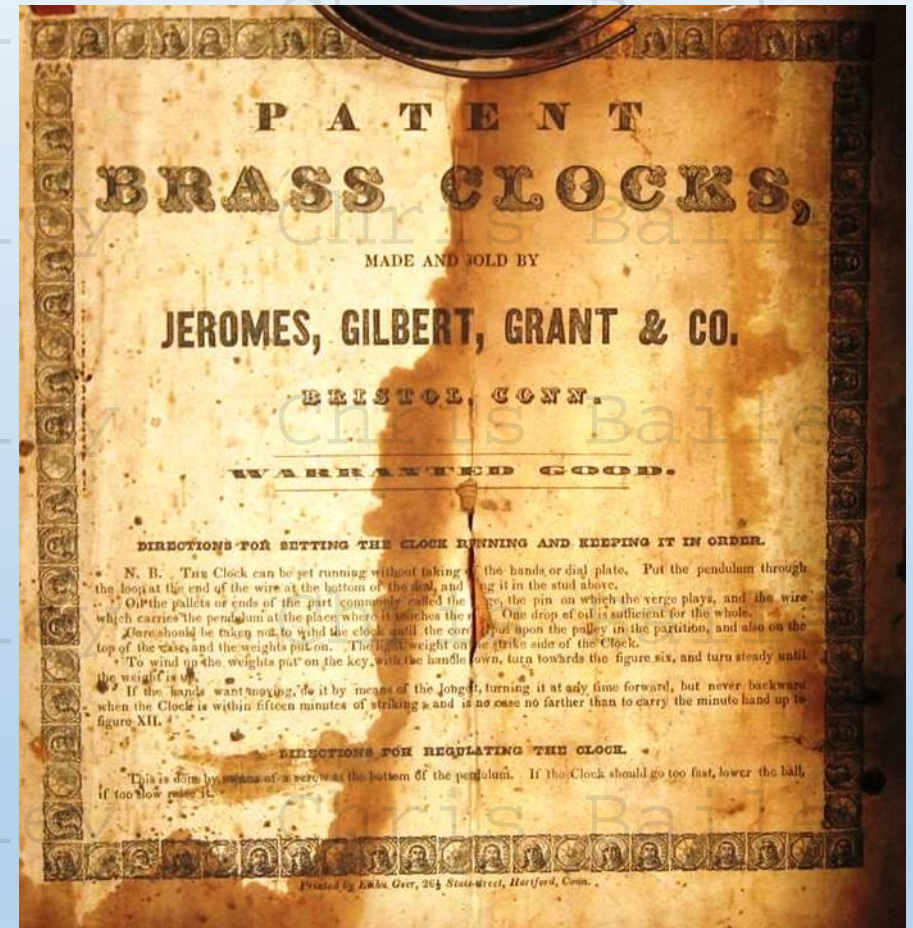




C. & N. Jerome's round side case, c. 1839, with zinc dial, an early OG-type movement and a card label.



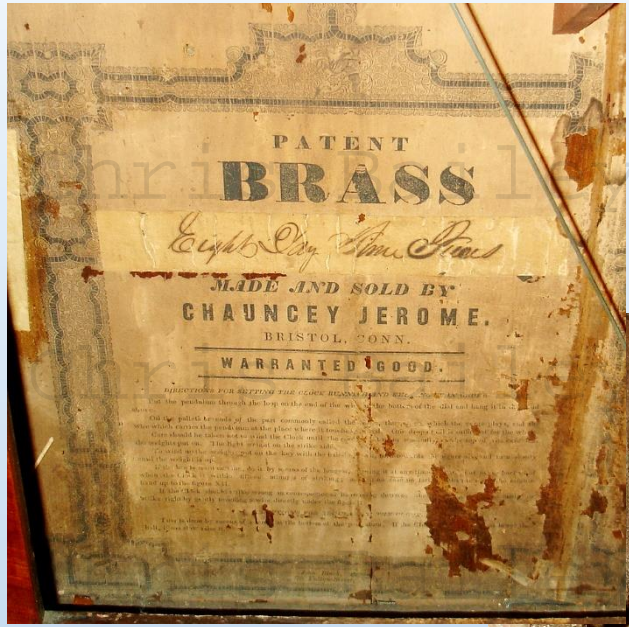
This Jeromes, Gilbert, Grant & Co. ogival front (OG) case clock, was made in 1839.





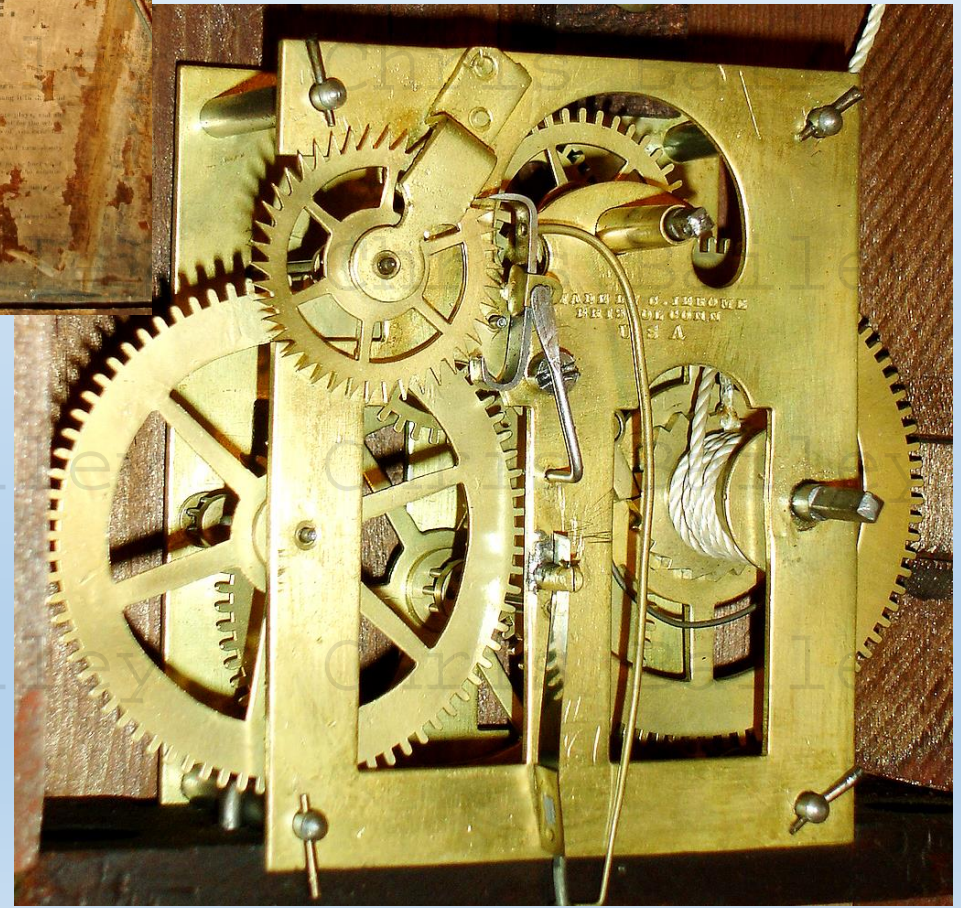
OG clocks were manufactured from 1839 to the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Without doubt, many millions were produced with both 8-day and 30-hour, weight and spring-driven, movements and sold in various size cases. They were also exported to many foreign countries.



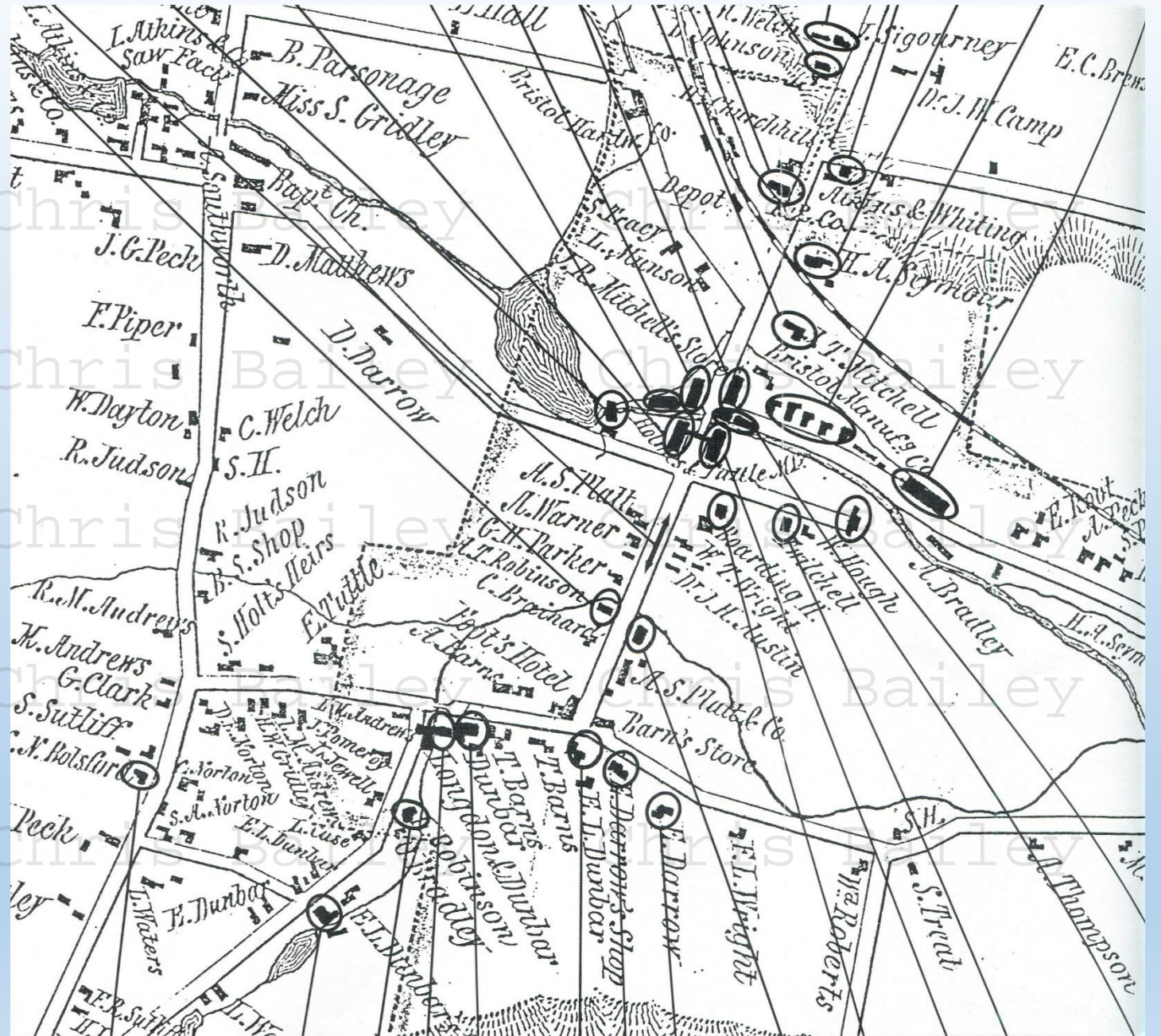


Chris Bailey

Rare 8-day  
time only  
OG, made  
about 1845.



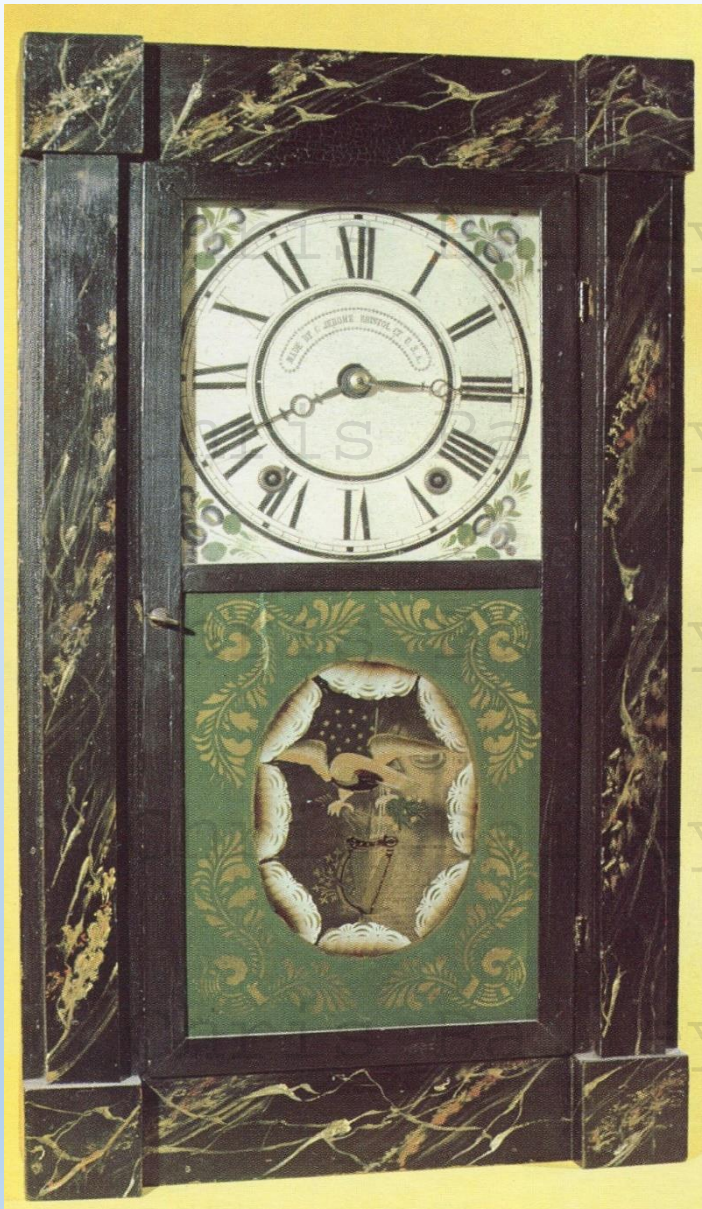
Downtown Bristol Connecticut in the early 1840s. Note Jerome's four factory buildings clustered near the downtown center. All four were destroyed by a huge fire in 1844



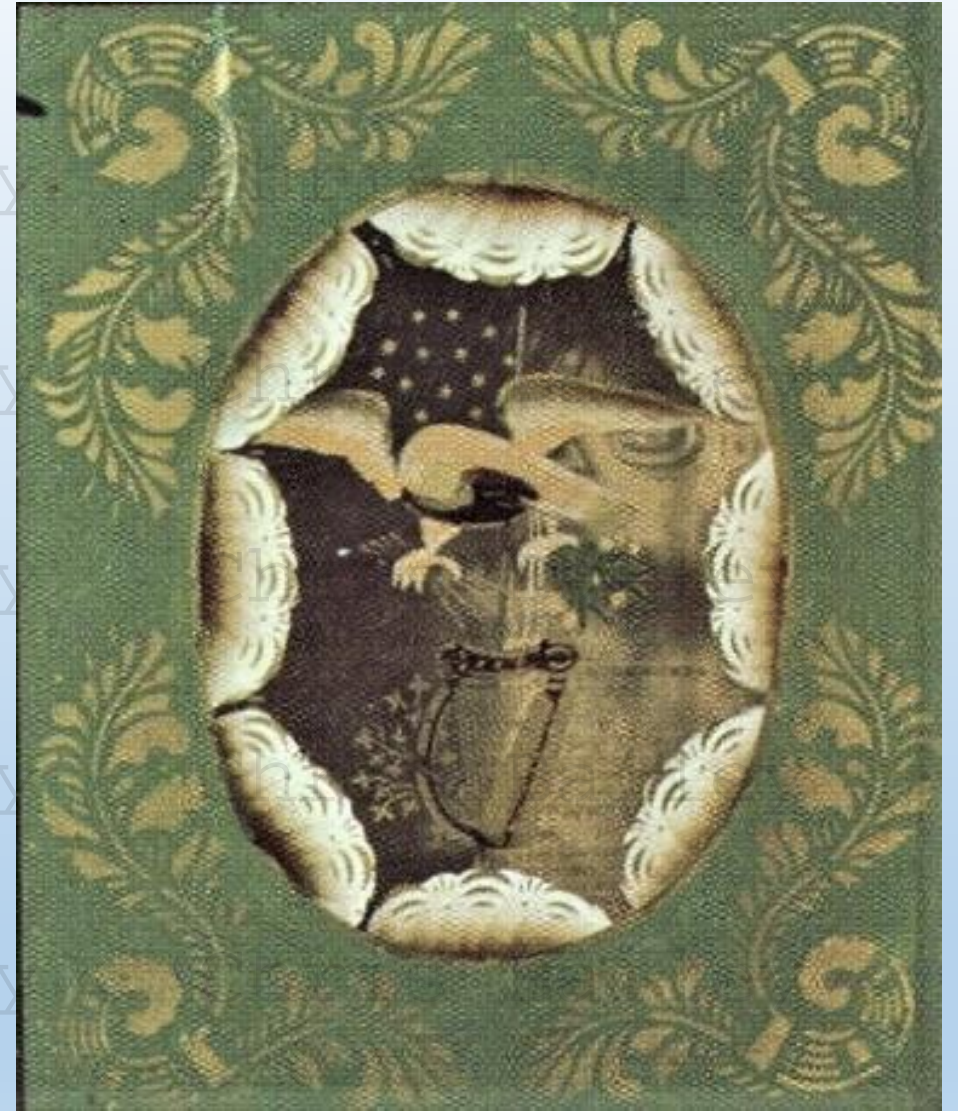


Small Jerome  
30-hour shelf  
clock, c. 1845.





A charming  
1840s paint  
marbleized  
wood case with  
stenciled glass by  
local decorator  
William B. Fenn  
who supplied  
tablets for many  
Bristol and  
Plymouth clocks.



Chris Bailey

Chris Bailey

Chris Bailey

Chris Bailey

Chris Bailey

Chris Bailey

# The British Invasion 1841

Chris Bailey

Chris Bailey

Chris Bailey

Chris Bailey

Chris Bailey

Chris Bailey

Chris Bailey

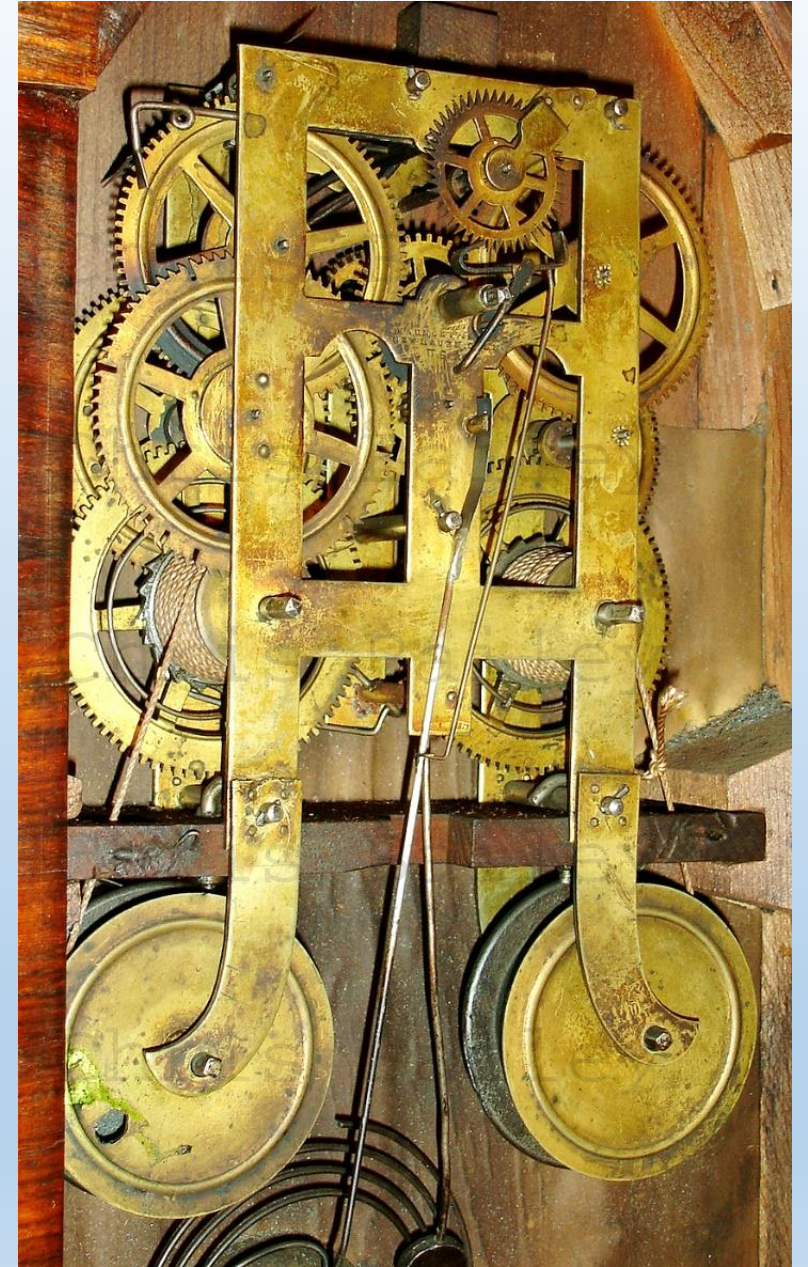
Chris Bailey

Chris Bailey

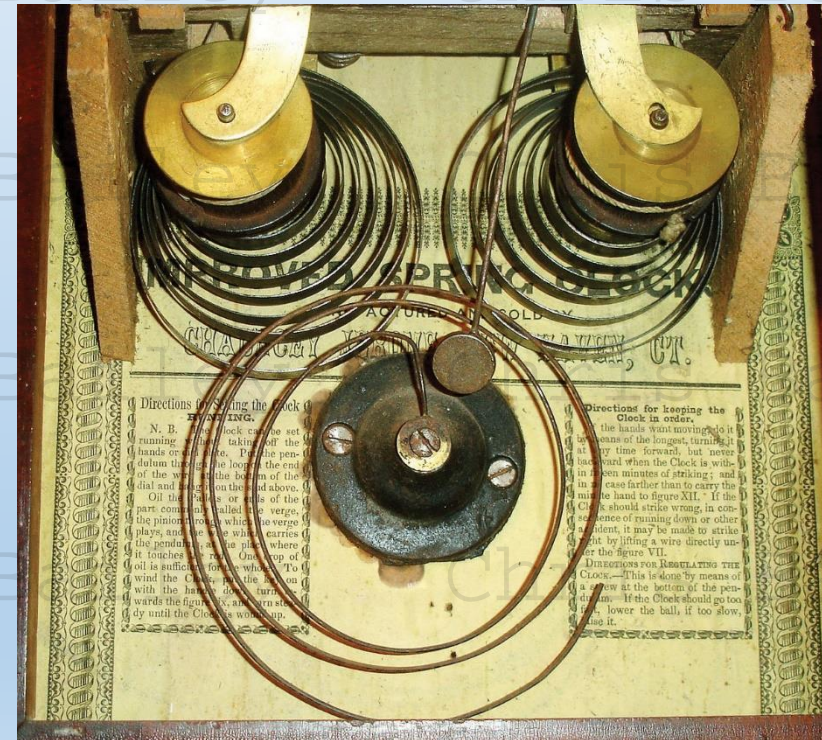




Jerome's giant fuse steeple clock, c. 1845 used 8-day weight movements that were adapted to be driven by springs hidden behind the brass discs. These were primarily exported and sold in England. Note: Westminster Abbey on the tablet.

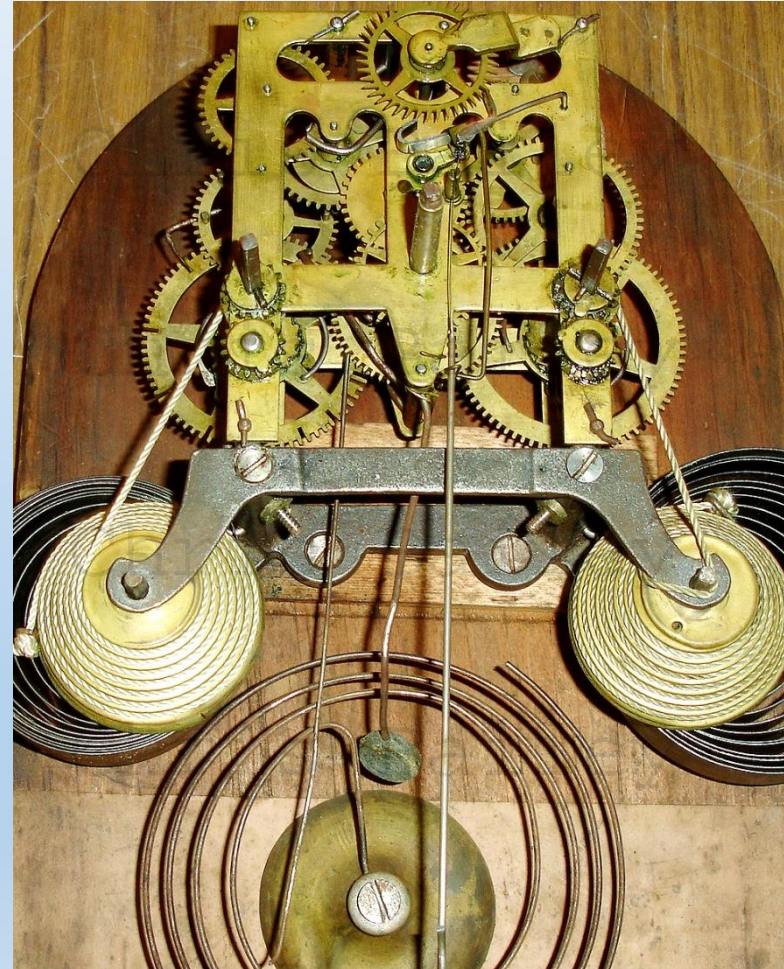


This Empire cased model was produced with weight or spring-driven movements in several sizes. Although they have New Haven labels, many were exported and originally sold in England





Two early Anglo-American clocks, both with English pearl inlaid cases and Jerome fuse-spring movements.



Chris Bailey Chris Bailey Chris Bailey

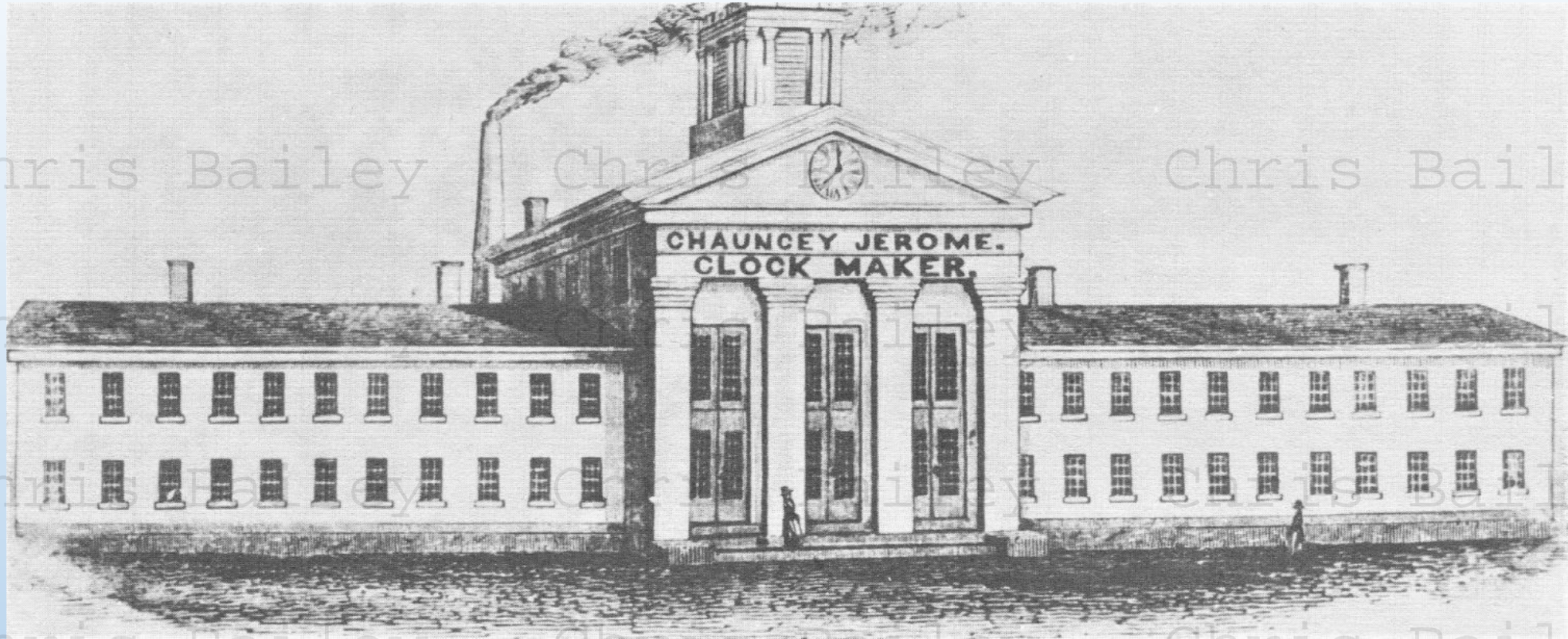
**After the 1844 Bristol Fire  
All Operations Were  
Moved to New Haven**

Chris Bailey Chris Bailey Chris Bailey

# **The New Haven Period**

## **1844-1856**

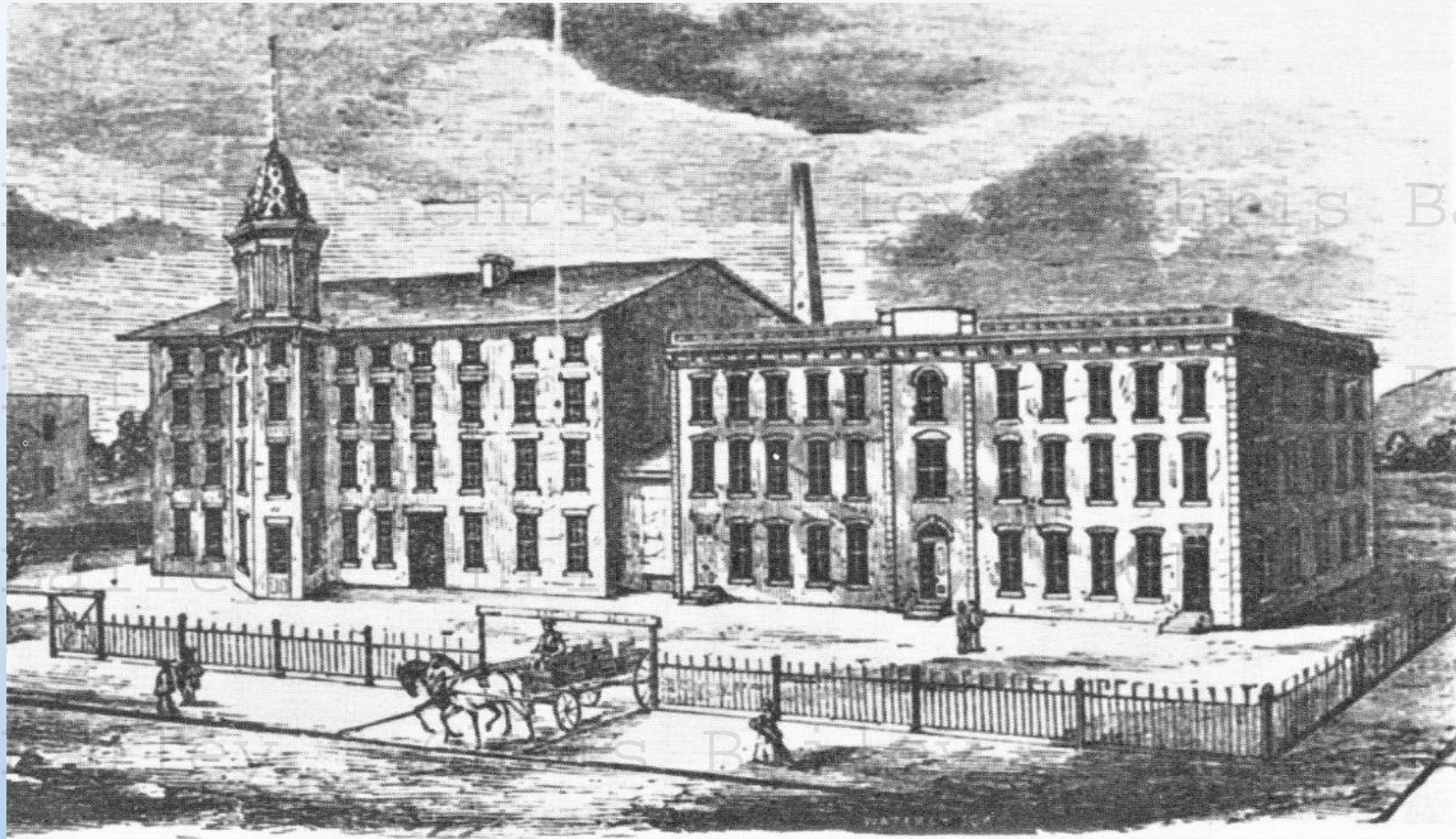
**Jerome began about 1843 moving his business to the city of New Haven, on Long Island sound, where ships could transport his clocks to southern and western ports. The great Bristol fire of 1844 destroyed his four Bristol factories after which he moved all his clock production to New Haven. In 1850 a joint stock company, the Jerome Mfg. Company was incorporated. Times were good!**



Jerome's New Haven factory appeared on many of his clock labels. The New Haven Clock Co. continued to use this factory until it was destroyed by fire in 1866.



Empire cased clocks, 30-hour or 8-day, weight or spring, large or small cases were made at New Haven. These have alarms which could be added for about 50¢ extra.



By 1850 Jerome's production was so large they expanded by renting a stone factory building at Ansonia, Conn.

**JEROME & Co.**  
 MANUFACTURERS AND WHOLESALE

**CLOCK DEALERS,**  
 No. 88 MARKET STREET,  
 Corner of Third Street  
 AND  
 No. 82 NORTH THIRD STREET,  
 PHILADELPHIA.

YOUNG & DUROSS PRS., BL'K H. ALLEY.  
 1852.

Jerome's 1852 trade catalog, the earliest known by any clock firm, was only 3¼" by 4½", but it illustrated 24 pages of clocks by Jerome and other Connecticut manufacturers.

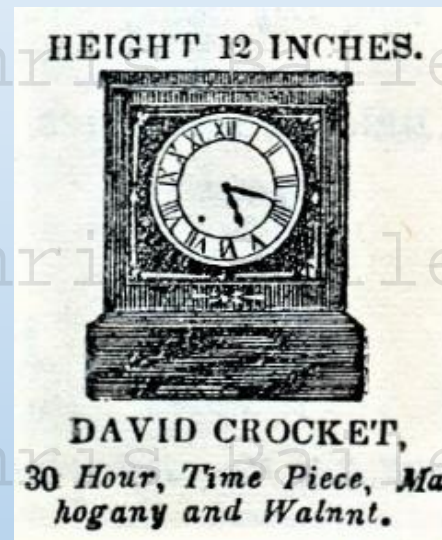
**JEROME & CO.**

**No. 88 MARKET STREET,**  
 Corner of Third Street,  
 PHILADELPHIA.

AND  
**No. 82 NORTH THIRD ST.,**  
 PHILADELPHIA.

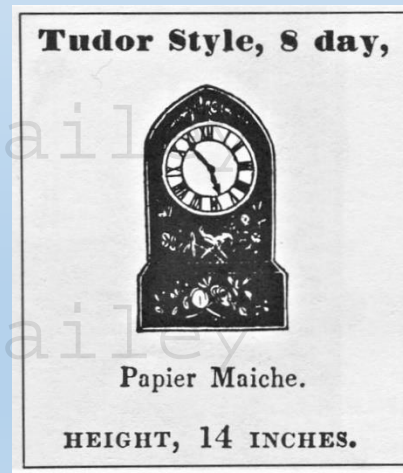
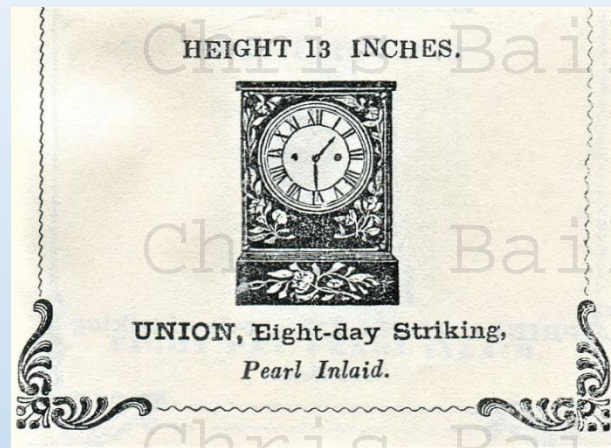


David Crocket model, simple 30-hour timepiece. Also illustration from the 1852 trade catalog.

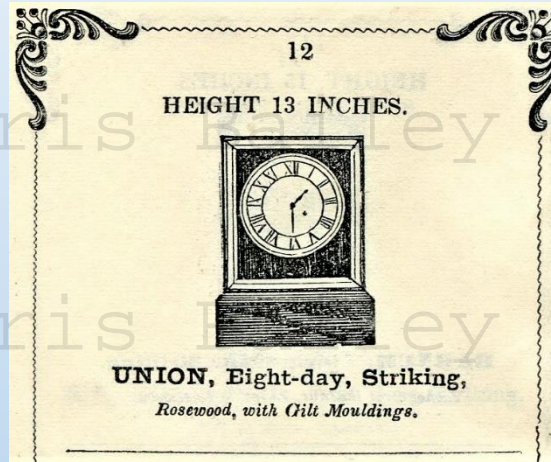
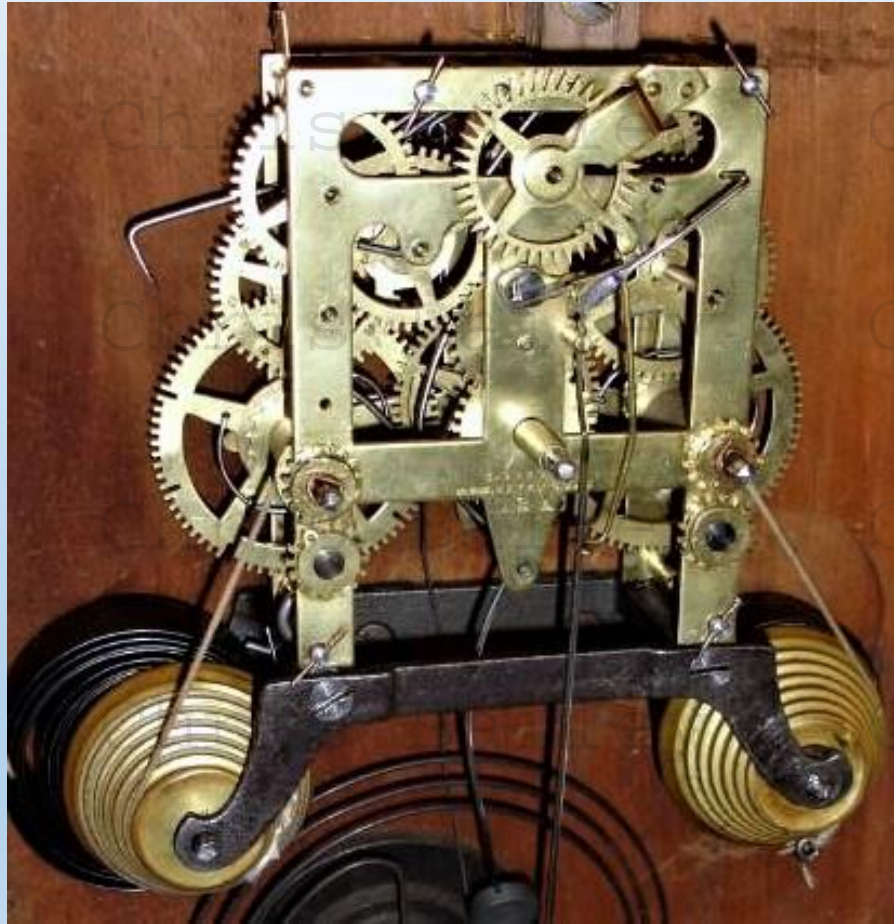




# Jerome models shown in the 1852 trade catalog.



Union model with gilt mouldings as shown in the 1852 trade catalog. The 8-day fusee-spring movement has Geneva stops.





Although the label suggests Chauncey Jerome was the manufacturer, the unusual balance escapement movements in these were developed by Samuel N. Botsford for Jerome. They were offered with gilt or bronze finished pressed brass or pearl inlaid papier maché case fronts and with paper or porcelain dials. All originally had glass shades to protect the movements from dust.

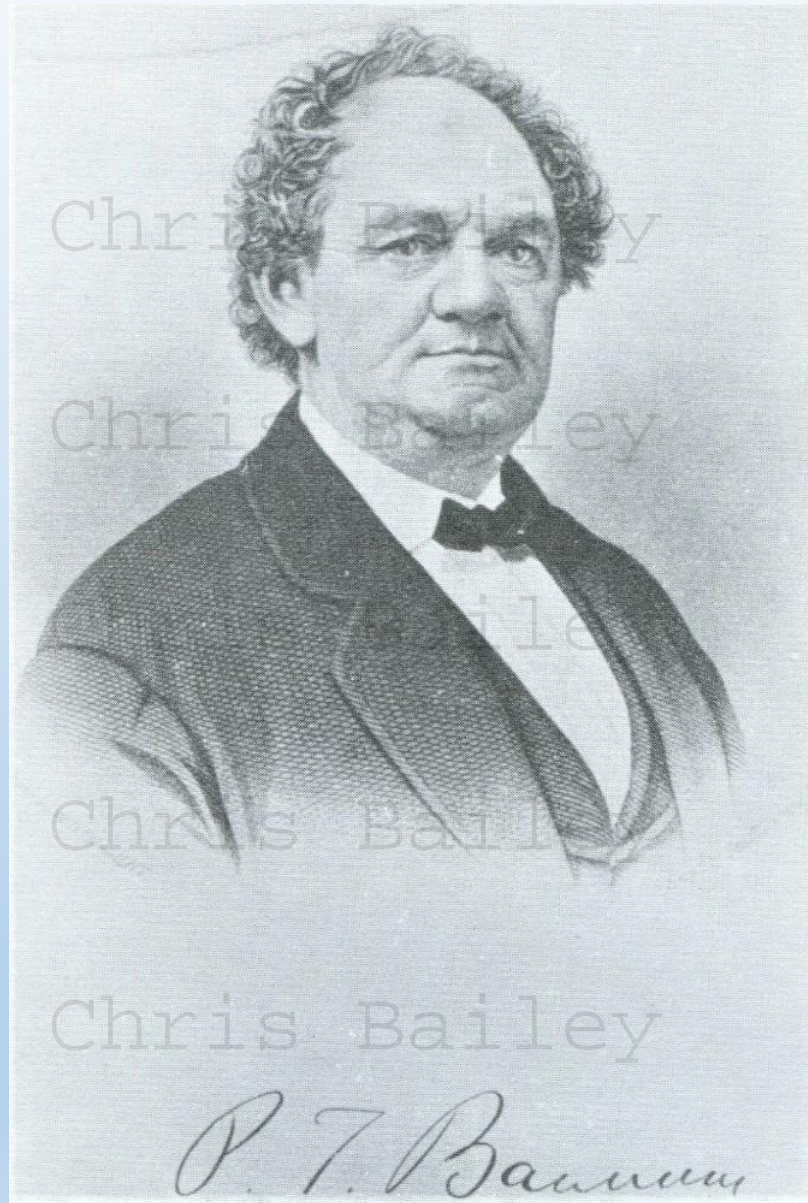


Chauncey Jerome at the peak of his clock manufacturing career, about 1850. This image was taken at the time Jerome was the mayor of New Haven, Connecticut.

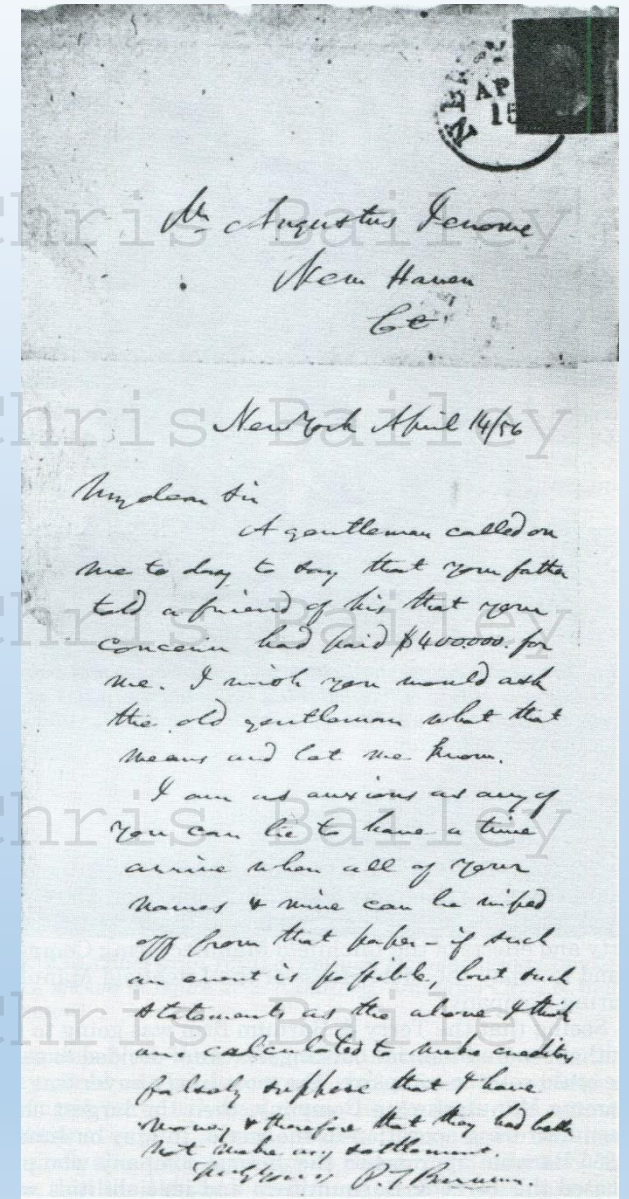
Chris Bailey Chris Bailey Chris Bailey

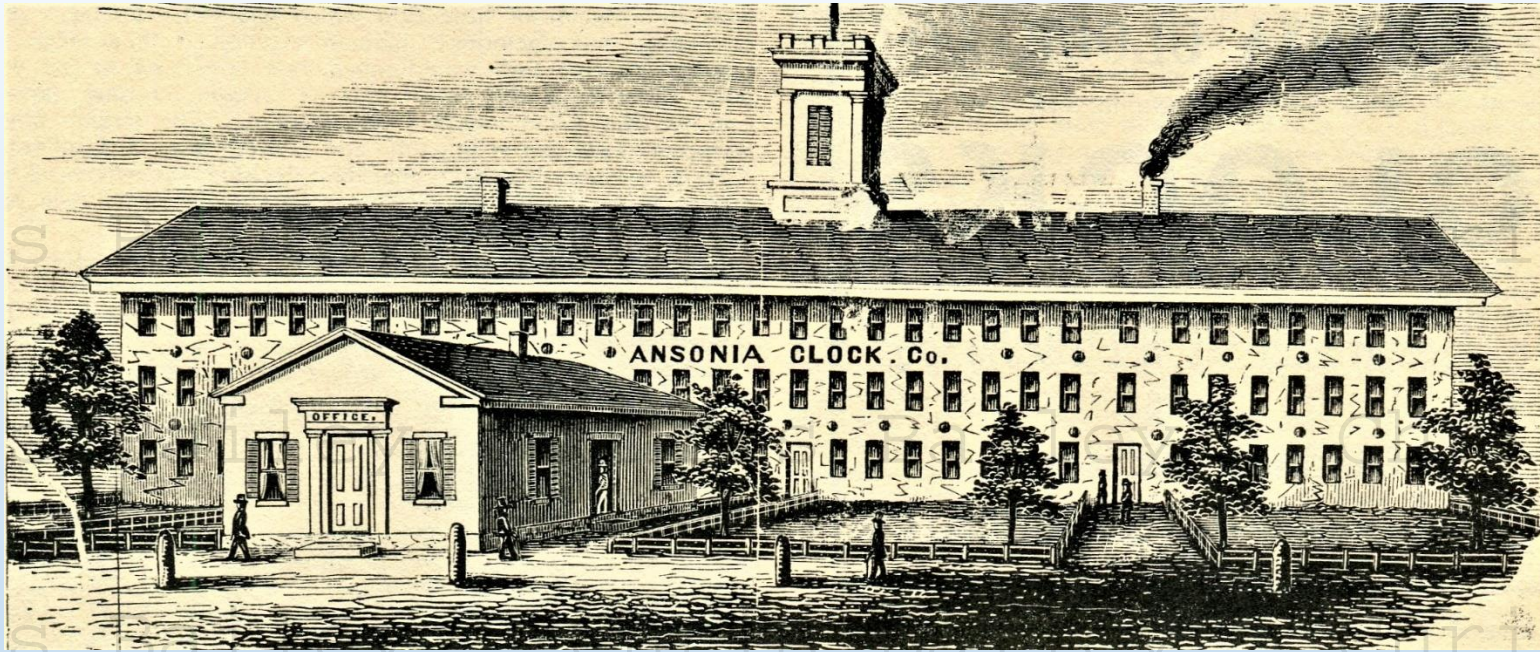
**Troubles & Tragedy**  
**The Jerome Mfg. Co.**  
**Goes Bankrupt in 1856.**

Chris Bailey Chris Bailey Chris Bailey

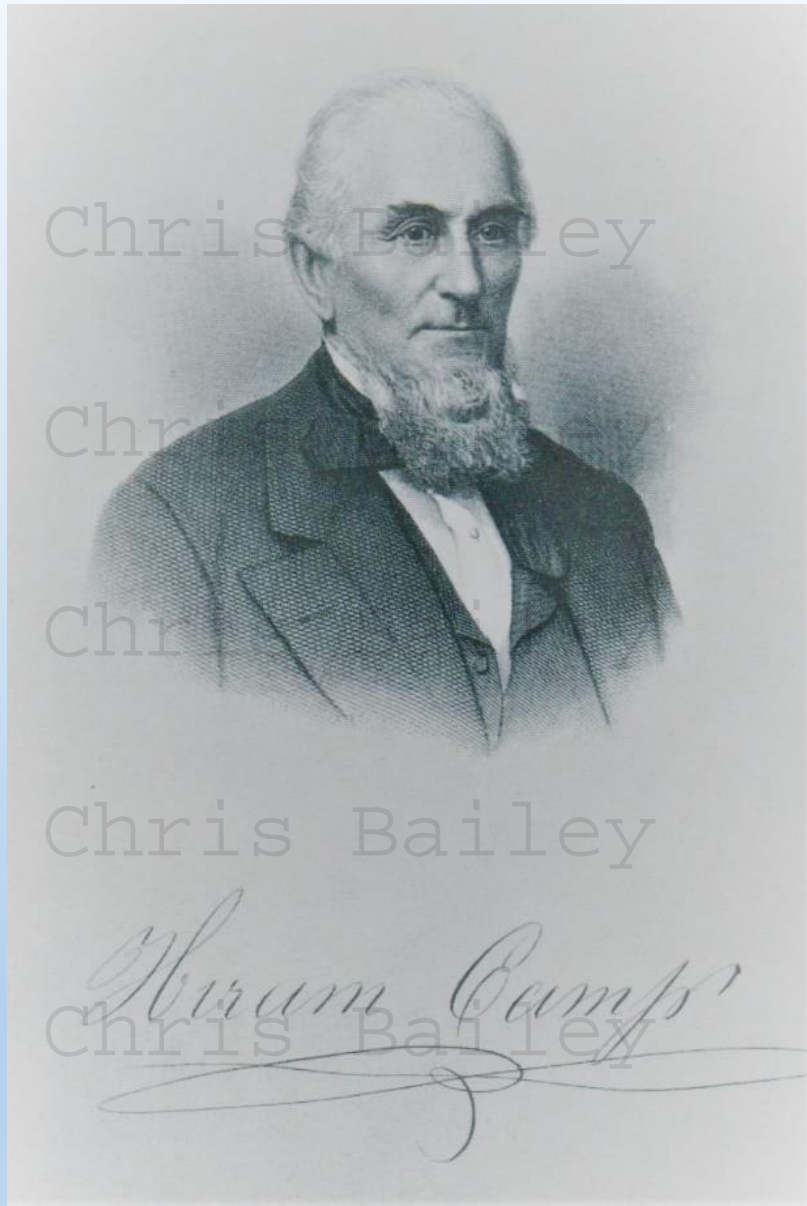


Phineas Taylor Barnum, the great showman, made a fortune duping the public and was a major figure in the ruination of Chauncey Jerome and his clock manufacturing business.





Barnum bought the remains of the above Ansonia factory, destroyed by fire in 1854 and formed Terry & Barnum Mfg. Co. Unwilling to fund the new firm further, he decided to persuade the Jerome Mfg. Co. to go into partnership – a move that bankrupted both firms.



Hiram Camp (1811-1893) worked in his uncle's factory, but in 1853 he formed a firm called the New Haven Clock Co. to produce movement for the Jerome Mfg. Co. In 1857 he was able to purchase the bankrupt Jerome firm. New Haven Clock Co. manufactured clocks until 1960.



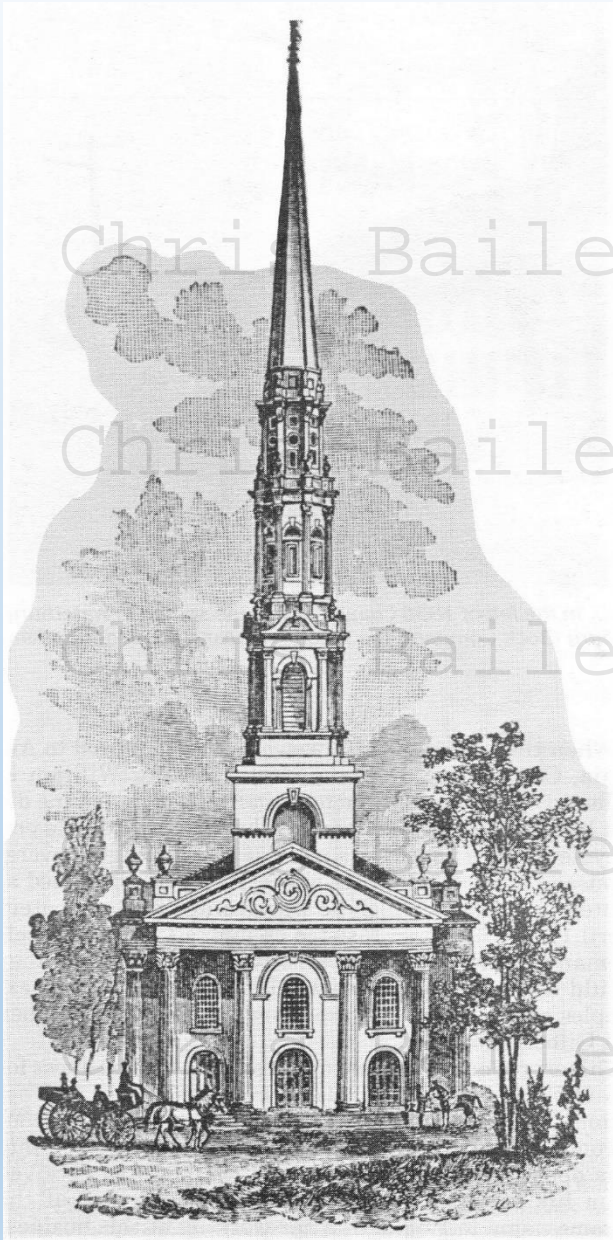
# **A Long Road Down**

## **1856-1866**

**Once the world's most prolific clock manufacturer, Jerome not only saw his business go bankrupt, but was forced to declare personal bankruptcy. Unlike Barnum, Jerome lost everything. The years that followed were anything but kind to him.**



In 1857 Jerome moved to Waterbury and set up the case department for the newly formed Waterbury Clock Co.



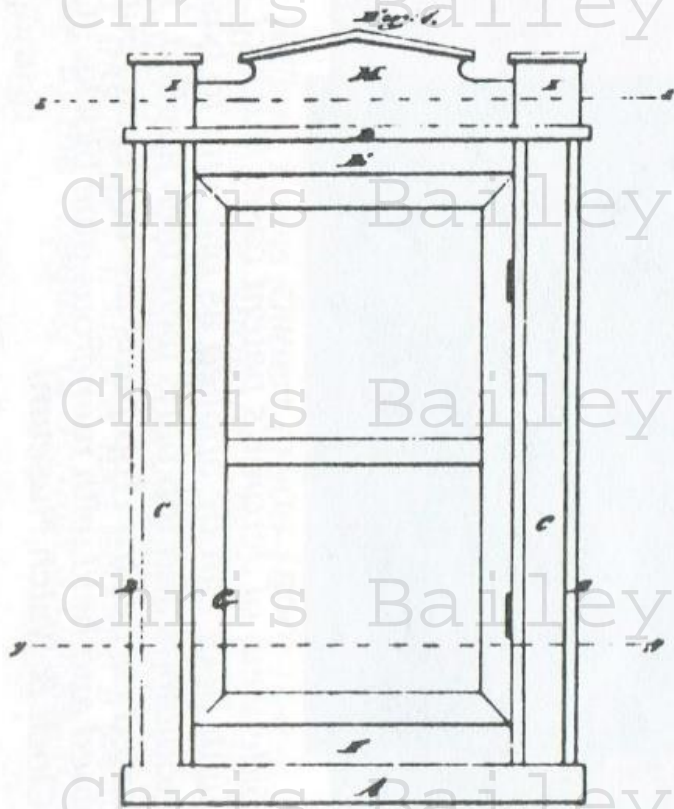
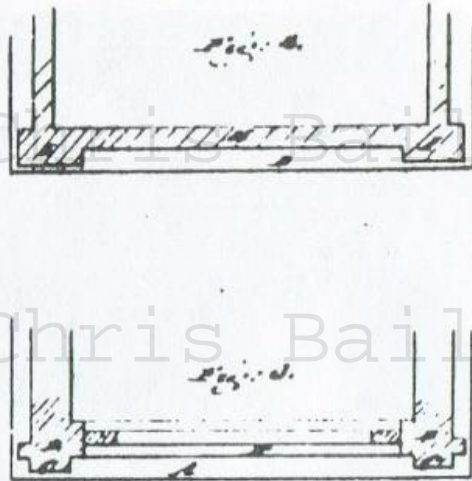
The morning of Jan. 19, 1857 a hurricane and snow storm blew over the steeple of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Congregational Church, Waterbury, nearly killing Jerome whose apartment was on the top floor of the building left of the church.



No. 883.

DESIGN.  
C. JEROME.  
CLOCK CASE FRONT.

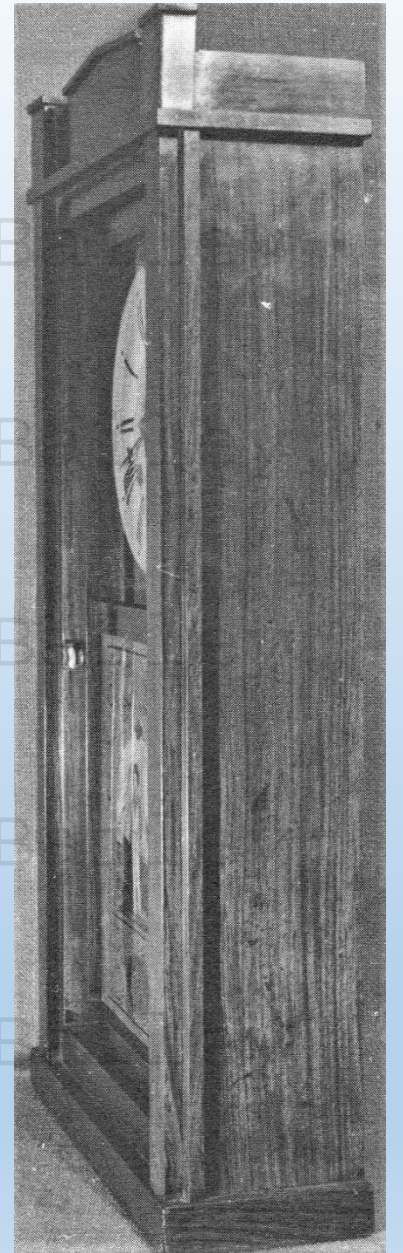
Patented Apr. 14, 1867.



C. Jerome's  
1857 patent  
for a new,  
and much  
cheaper way  
to produce  
clock cases.



Jerome's cheap case. It was basic - an open front box with a movement installed to which was attached a front with a door. Columns, top pieces, base and top moldings were veneered flat pieces applied with glue. No miters, thus simple, easy and fast to produce. Glasses were held in place with flat wood strips.

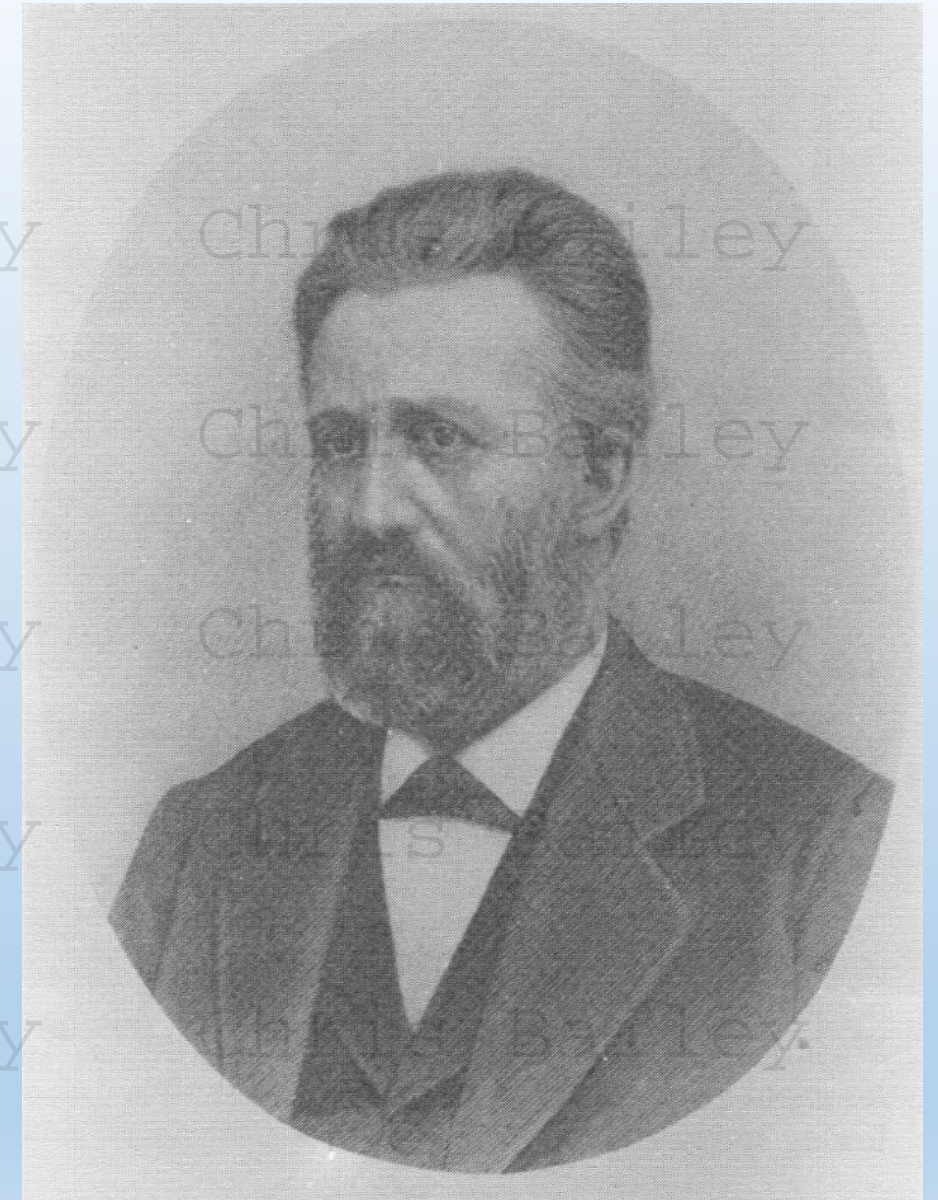


*Patented April 14, 1857, by Chauncey Jerome.*

Spurious label from back of door of the 1857 patent case. Gilbert, Hubbard & Co., of Ansonia, Conn. hired Jerome in 1857 to make them cases, but insisted on putting these fake labels in them as Jerome's name was known world over for Yankee clocks.

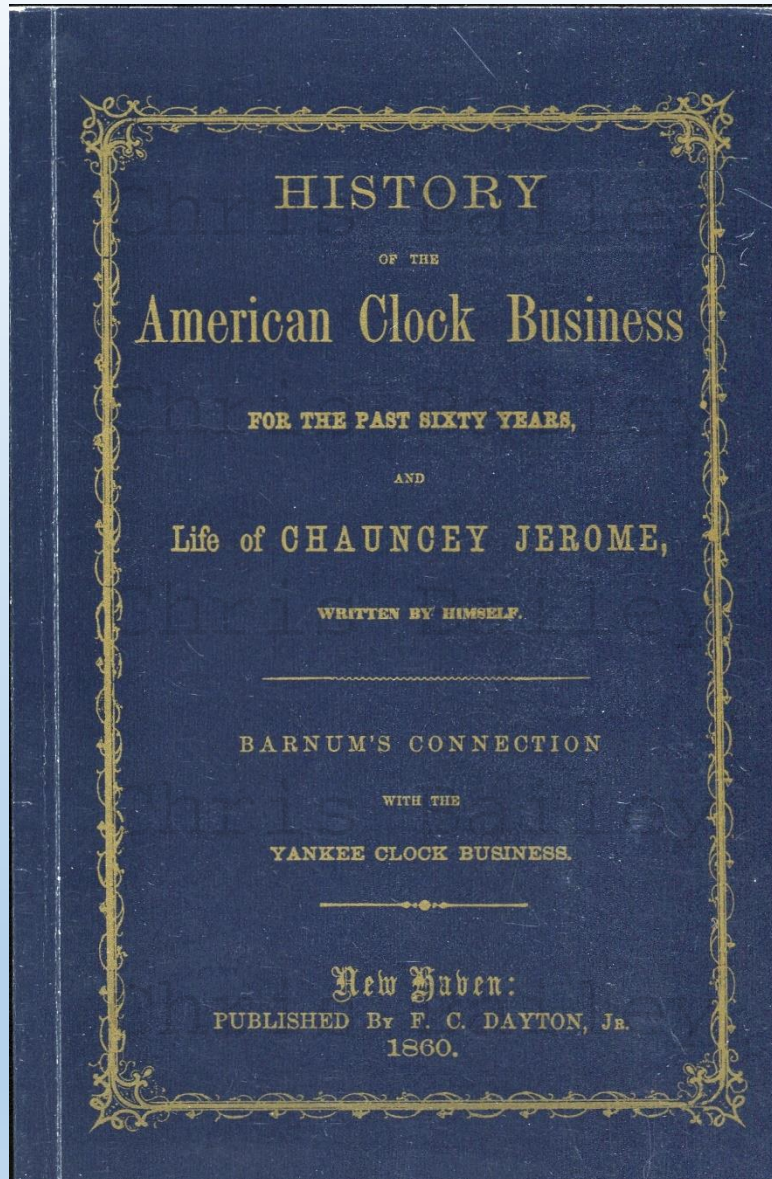


William L. Gilbert (1806-1890) was probably Jerome's least favorite man in the clock business. Once Jerome's workman, later his partner, a serious competitor and for a time in 1857, his employer. Jerome felt with some justification that Gilbert had become a very wealthy man largely by copying Jerome's tools, methods and his inventions.

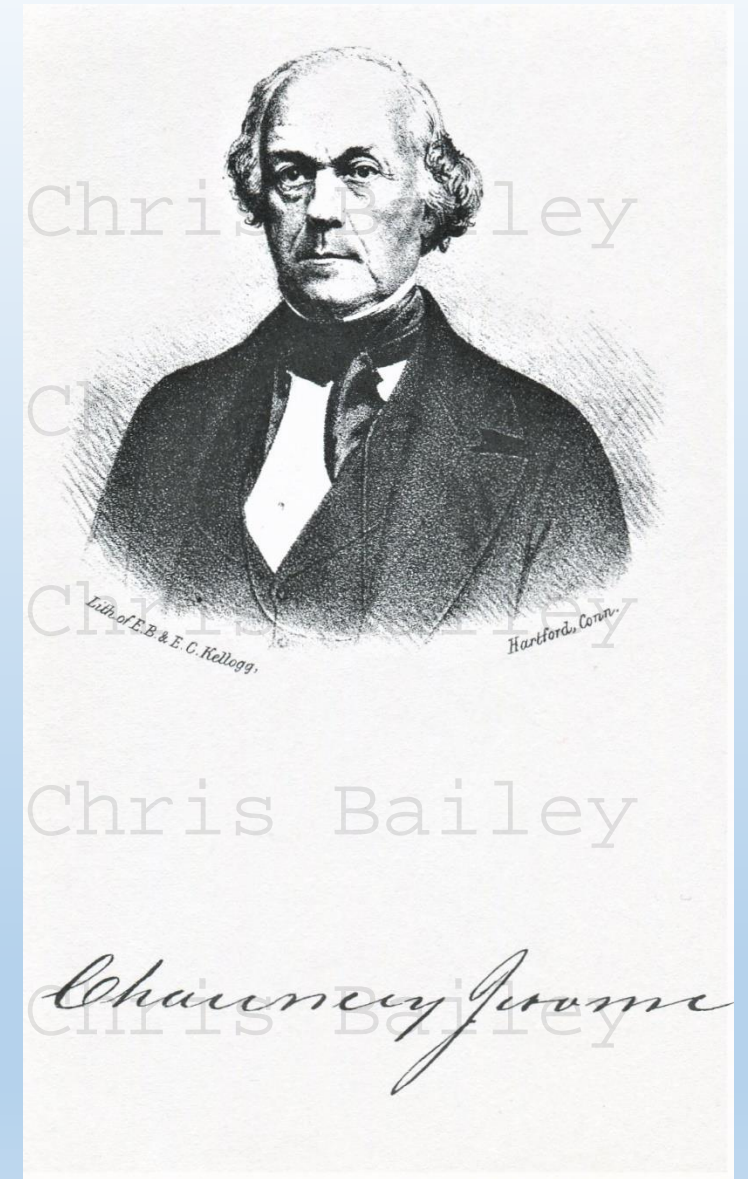


Chris Bailey Chris Bailey Chris Bailey  
Chris Bailey Chris Bailey Chris Bailey  
**The Final Years**  
Chris Bailey Chris Bailey Chris Bailey  
**1860-1868**  
Chris Bailey Chris Bailey Chris Bailey  
Chris Bailey Chris Bailey Chris Bailey





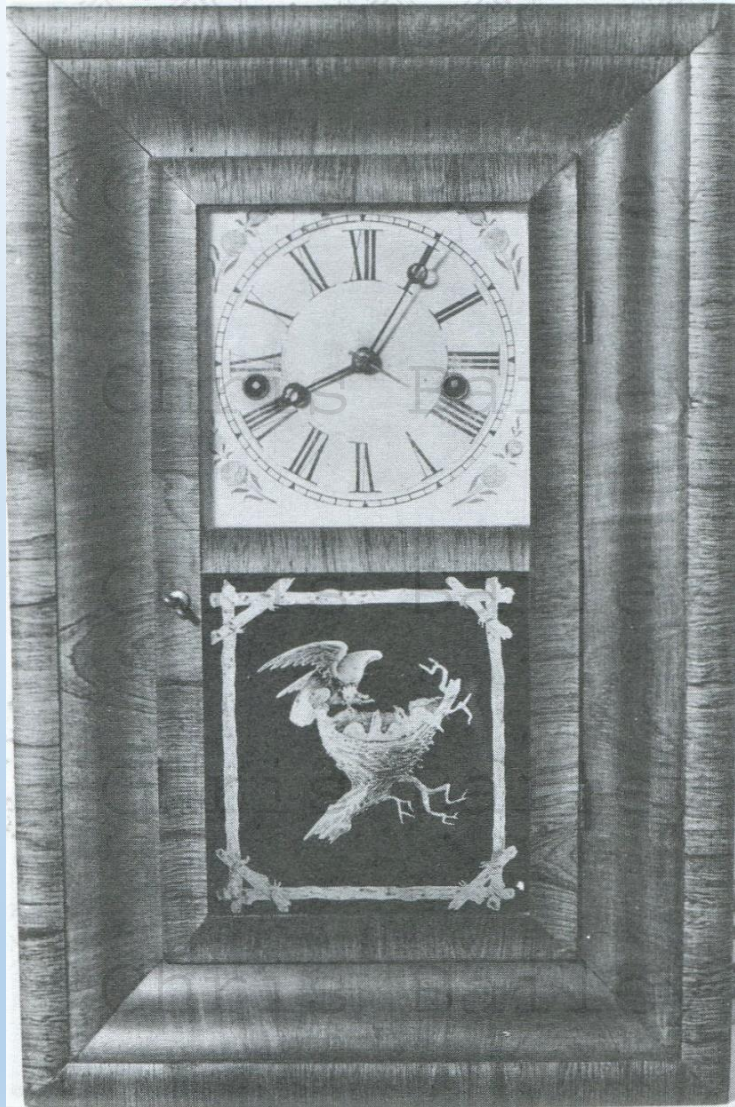
In 1860, Jerome published his autobiography and history of the Connecticut clock business. It is a truly fascinating, accurate account which every clock collector should read.



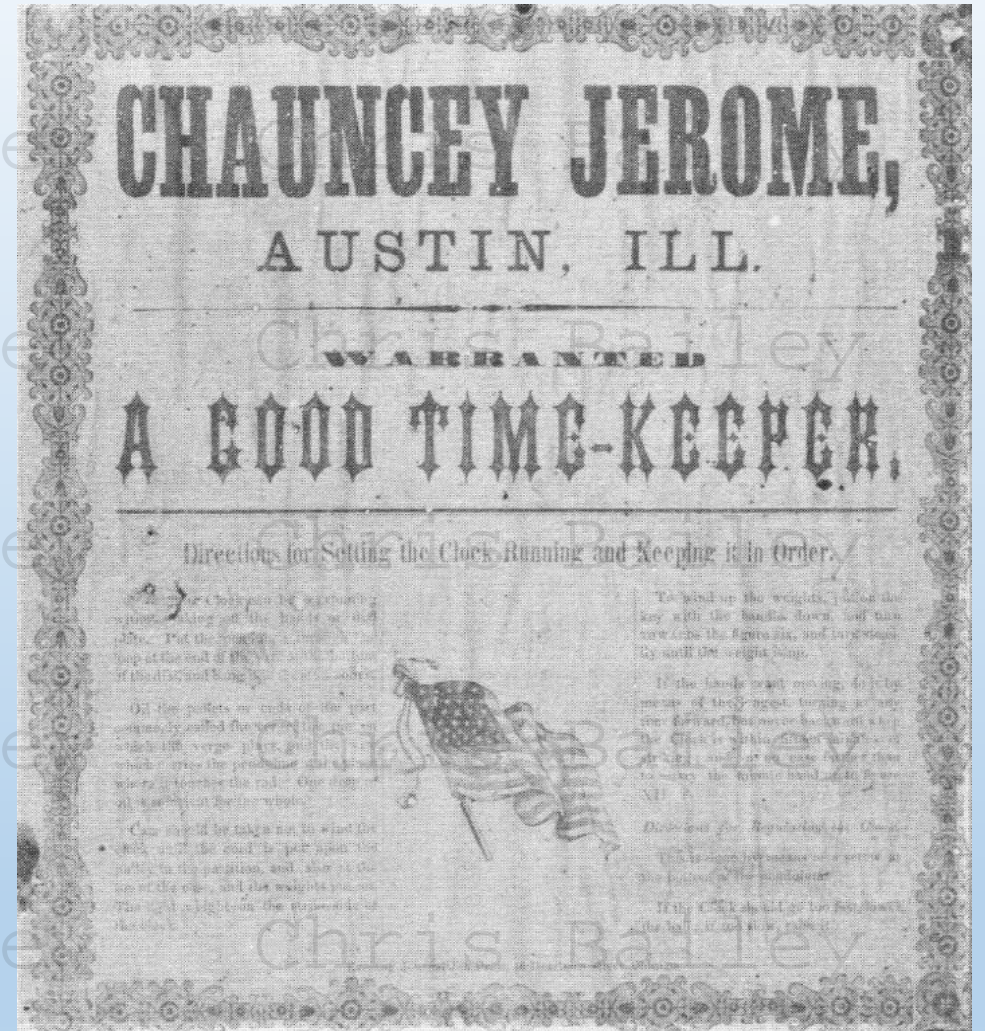
Mr. J. Terry Esq. Dear Sir,  
Please accept this Book  
as a token of respect  
for a work the author  
feels for your learnable  
Father Eli Terry Esq.  
Who was the greatest  
Clock maker of his Day  
Yours with much esteem  
Chas. Bailey

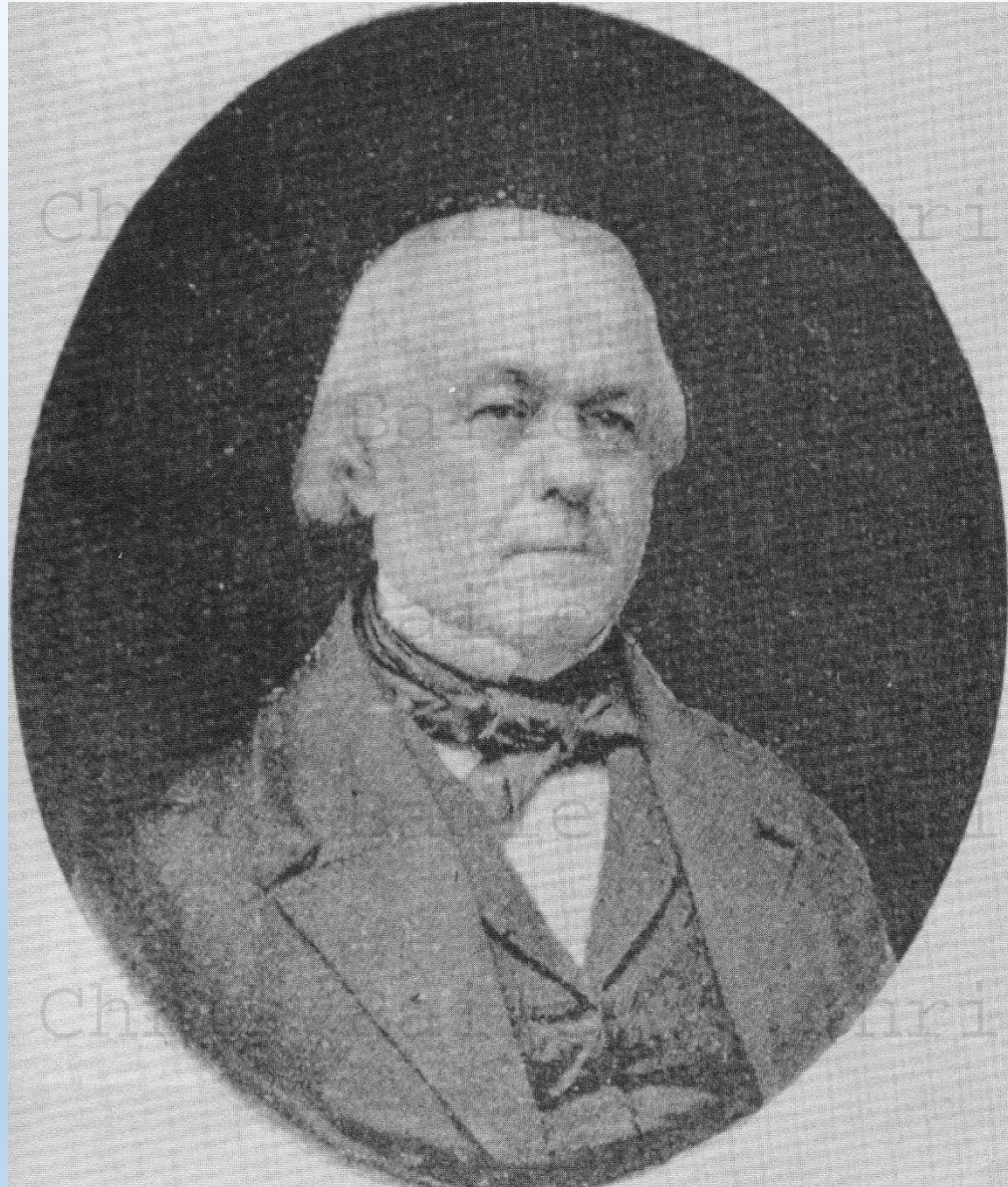
Jerome had great reverence for Eli Terry. He presented a copy of his 1860 history to Steven Terry, youngest son of Eli Terry. Jerome noted the gift was “a token of respect” and called Eli Terry “the greatest clock maker of his day.”

In 1866, at age 73, Jerome was persuaded to go to Austin, IL, near Chicago, to become superintendent of a newly formed U. S. Clock & Brass Company. During his tenure, about a year, a small number of shelf clocks were produced which carried the label, Chauncey Jerome, Austin, Illinois. These he probably acquired in trade for his labor at the firm. They are the last Chauncey Jerome clocks produced. In less than a year Jerome returned to New Haven, Conn. where he died Apr. 20, 1868, age 74.



A miniature  
OOG clock  
with Jerome's  
Austin, IL  
label, made in  
the fall of  
1866 or the  
spring of  
1867.





The  
end of  
an era

...  
and the  
end of  
this  
talk

