

A Technological Survey of the
Early **Horace Greeley Martin**
History Leading to the Original
Vibroplex We Know Today

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Victorian London - Disease - 'telegraphic paralysis'

Telegraph clerks will hear with alarm of telegraphic paralysis, a new malady reported by a French physician to the Academie des Sciences. An employé who had been engaged in a telegraph office for nine years, found that he could not form clearly the letters U, represented by two dots and a stroke, I by two dots and S by three dots. On trying to trace the letters, his hand became stiff and cramped. He then endeavoured to use his thumb alone, and this succeeded for two years, when his thumb was similarly attacked, and subsequently tried the first and second fingers, but in two months these were also paralysed. Finally he had recourse to the wrist which also shortly became disabled. If he forced himself to use his hand, both hand and arm shook violently and cerebral excitement ensued. It appears that this disorder is very common amongst telegraph clerks.

Telegrapher's Paralysis.

Following is an interesting letter from W. S. Cassell, one of the managers of the Western Union Telegraph Co.:

“BLOOMINGTON, IND., Jan. 12, 1886.

I have been in the telegraph business for more than twenty years, and for the past five years have been troubled with what is called Writer's Cramp, or Telegrapher's Paralysis. At times my arm became so weak that I could not use it in sending dispatches, and had to use my left. Have spent many restless nights, the pain reaching from my hand up into my shoulder. Tried everything I could hear of, but with scarcely any relief. Having strained my left side a few weeks ago, I got one of ALL-COCK'S PLASTERS, as I usually do in such cases, and accidentally happened to see where some one had cured a weak wrist by using one of these Plasters. I got another at once and cut it in two, and put one half around my wrist. In less than two days after the pain had entirely left my wrist and arm, and in two weeks I could send nearly as well as ever. I write this hoping it will reach the eyes of others who may be afflicted as I was, as I know there are scores of them.”

Los Angeles Herald, Vol 34,
No. 57, 9 June 1890, via
California Digital Newspaper
Collection

nerve exertions. An operator transmitting fifteen thousand words in eight hours, as many do, is compelled to depress the key one hundred and eighty thousand times and to release the key an equal number of times, making another one hundred and eighty thousand upward movements—that is, an average of three hundred and sixty thousand nerve exertions in eight hours. The result is that operators not infrequently completely lose control over the key, becoming victims of what is known as “telegrapher’s paralysis.”

American (Railroad) vs. International Morse (similar codes highlighted)

Letter	International Code	American Morse	Letter	International Code	American Morse	Digit	International Code	American Morse
A	•••	••	N	•••	••	0	••••••••	••••••••
B	•••••	•••••	O	•••••	••	1	••••••••	•••••
C	••••••	•••	P	••••••	••••••	2	••••••••	••••••
D	••••	••••	Q	•••••••	••••••	3	••••••••	••••••
E	•	•	R	•••••	••••	4	•••••••	•••••••
F	••••••	••••	S	••••	••••	5	••••••	•••••
G	•••••	••••	T	••••	••	6	••••••	•••••••
H	•••••	•••••	U	•••••	••••	7	•••••••	•••••
I	••	••	V	••••••	••••••	8	••••••••	••••••
J	•••••••	•••••	W	••••••	••••	9	••••••••	•••••
K	•••••	••••	X	••••••	•••••	Wikipedia		
L	•••••	•••	Y	•••••••	•••••			
M	••••	•••	Z	••••••	•••••			

Common punctuation

Symbol	International Code	American Morse ^[7]	Symbol	International Code	American Morse ^[7]
Period [.]	-----	.....	Apostrophe [']	-----	.... .... (QX)
Comma [,]	-----	....	Slash [/]	-----	... - (UT)
Question mark [?]	-----	.....	Hyphen [-]	-----	.... .... (HX)
Exclamation mark [!]	-----	....	Parenthesis (open) [(]	-----	..... .. (PN) ^[note 1]
Ampersand [&]	----- ^[note 2]	....^[note 3]	Parenthesis (close) [)]	-----	..... .. .. (PII) ^[note 1]
Paragraph break	-----	----- ^[note 3]	Quotation mark (open) ["]	-----	.... .. (QN)
Semicolon [;]	-----	... .. (SI) ^[note 4]	Quotation mark (close) ["]	-----	.... .... (QJ)
Colon [:]	-----	... . . (KEE)	Wikipedia		



youtu.be/XjupJslRj5E



Spouses and Children

✓ Preferred



Horace G. Martin

1873-1939 • 2Z3B-YNW



Gena Stephens

1876-1934 • 2Z34-NQC

Marriage

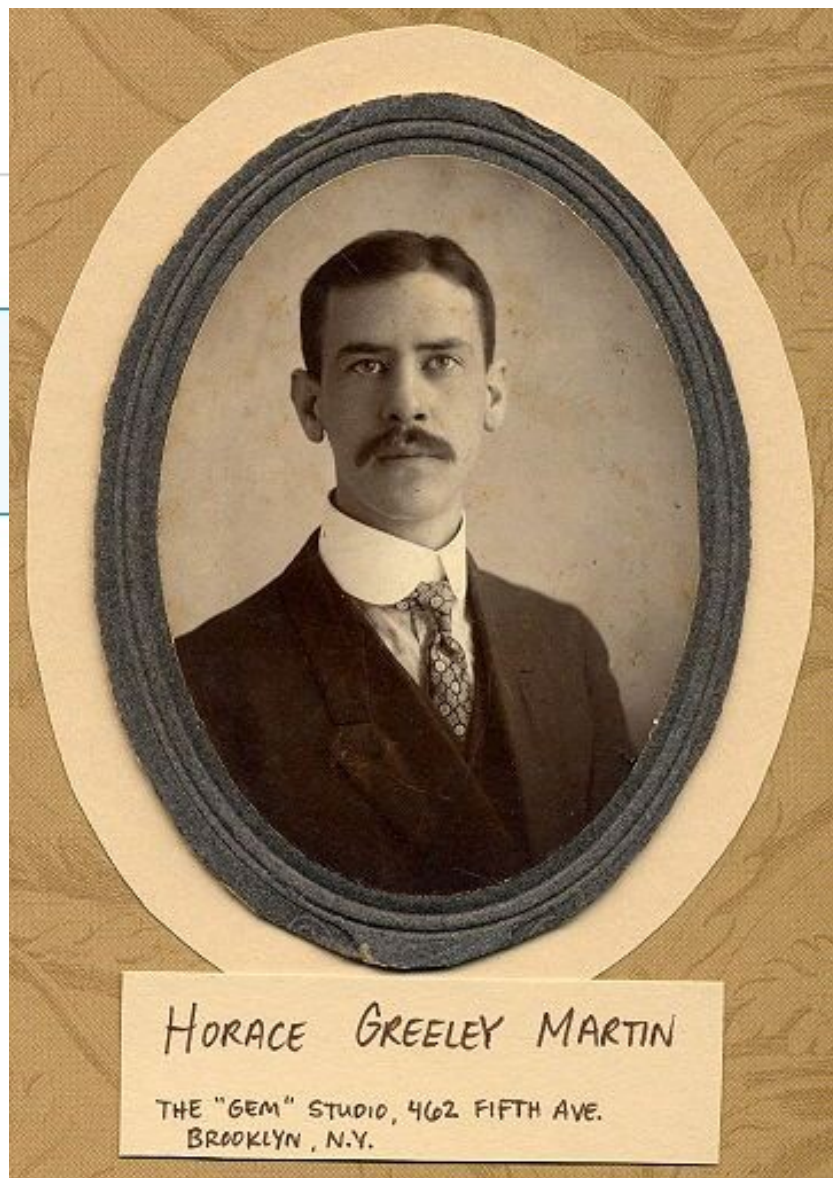
30 Dec 1890

, Fulton, Georgia

INVENTOR,

Horace G. Martin

familysearch.org



Children (8) ^



Horace Greeley Martin Jr

1893-1953 • GMTP-F2F



Marjorie Martin

1900-1962 • G4CX-BKX



Robert Martin

1903-Deceased • GMTP-C52



James Martin

1904-Deceased • GMTP-VTB



William Martin

1906-Deceased • GMTP-8DX



Alice Whitlock Martin

1909-1986 • 2Z3B-TGL



Estelle Martin

1912-Deceased • GMTP-NGF



John M Martin

Deceased • G8YN-FMG



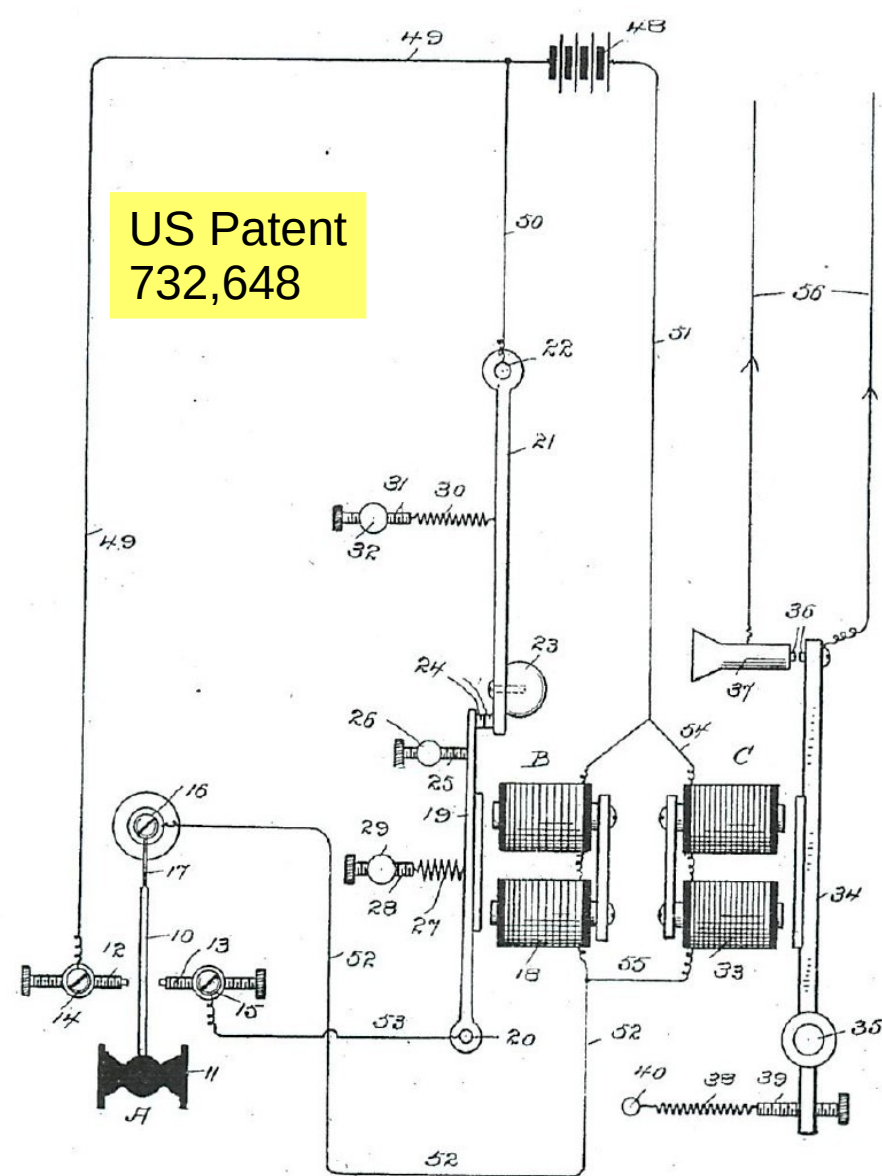
+ ADD CHILD

Patent	Inventor	Filed	Granted	Comments
732648	H. G. Martin	6 Oct 1902	30 Jun 1903	Electromechanical buzzer produced dots
767303	H. G. Martin	7 May 1904	9 Aug 1904	Electromechanical buzzer produced dots
CA 90389	H. G. Martin	22 Oct 1904	6 Dec 1904	Canadian version of 732648
842154	H. G. Martin	16 Apr 1906	22 Jan 1907	Fully Mechanical Original Design
1042457	H. G. Martin	1 Jul 1911	29 Oct 1912	So-called "Missing Patent"
1445226	H. G. Martin	10 Dec 1921	13 Feb 1923	Fully Mechanical
2148028	H. G. Martin, Jr.	2 Nov 1937	21 Feb 1939	Motorized Dot Maker
2228470	H. G. Martin	11 May 1940	14 Jan 1941	Multi-op Motorized Dot Maker

1st Patent

30 June 1903

www.vibroplex.com



2nd Patent

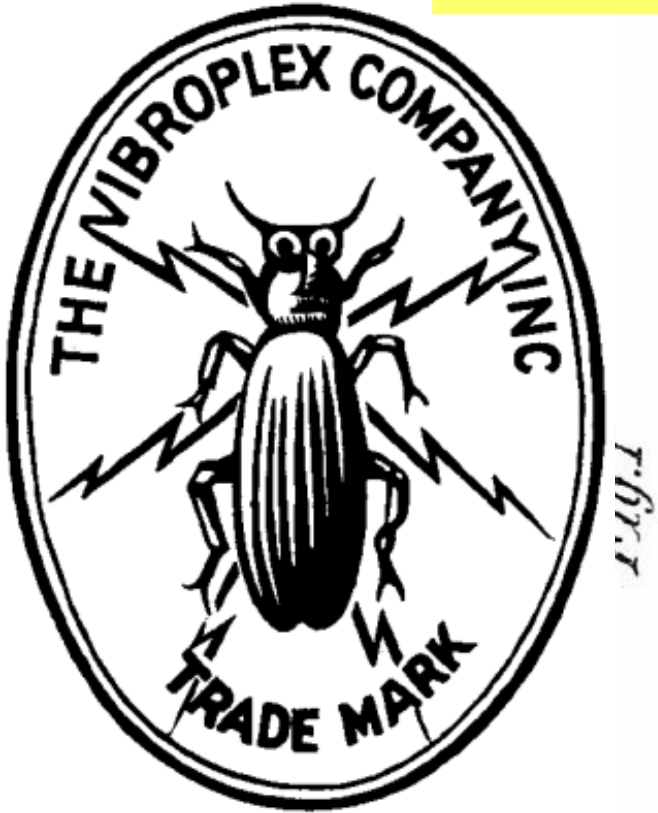


Fig. 1

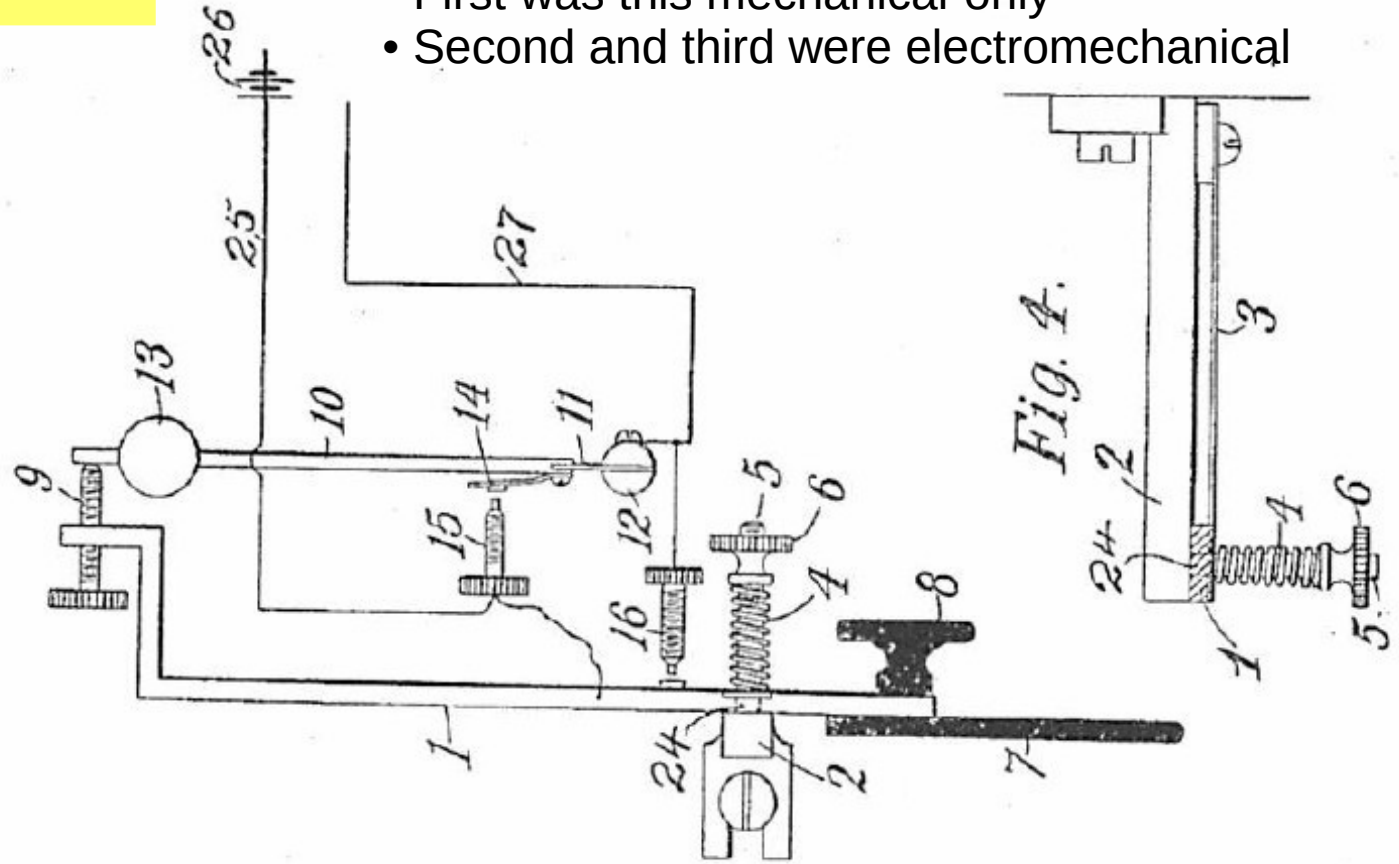


Fig. 4.

Figure 1 of US Patent 767,303, 9 Aug 1904

- Three figures
- First was this mechanical-only
- Second and third were electromechanical

Vibroplex

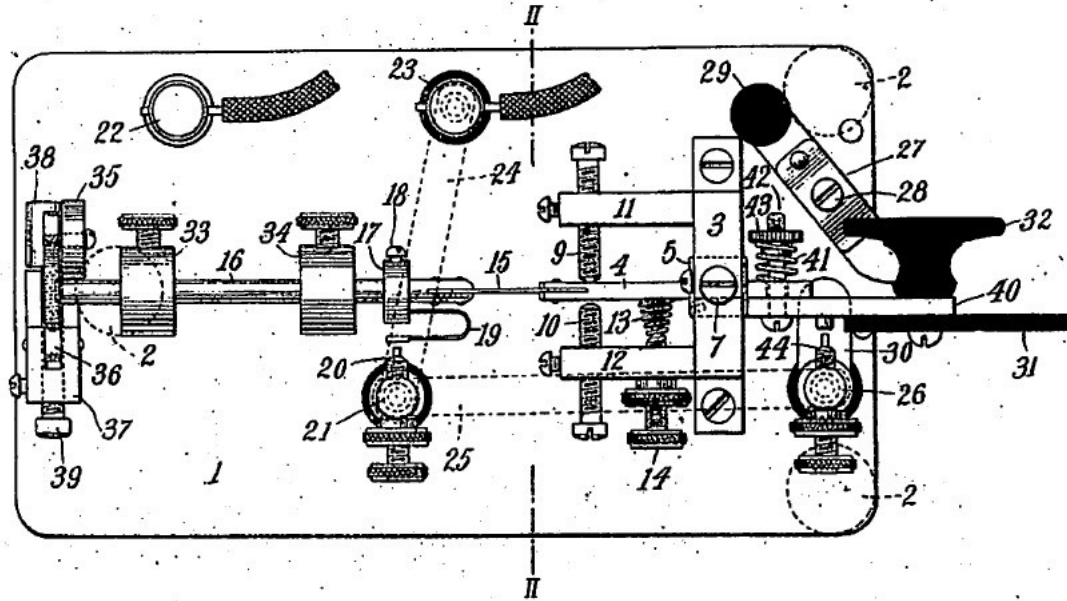
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From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Vibroplex is the brand of side-to-side mechanical, semi-automatic [Morse key](#) first manufactured and sold in 1905 by the Vibroplex Company, after its invention and patent^[1] by [Horace Greeley Martin](#) of New York City in 1904. The original device became known as a "bug", most likely due to the original logo, which showed an "electrified bug".^[2] The Vibroplex Company has been in business continuously for 116 years, as of 2021. [Amateur radio](#) operator [Scott E. Robbins](#), also known by the [call sign](#) W4PA, became the eighth owner of the Vibroplex Company on December 21, 2009. The company is located in [Knoxville, Tennessee](#).

The most common Vibroplex models have a single lever with a flat thumbpiece, or paddle, on the left side and a fingerpiece, or knob, on the right side.

Fig. 1



3rd Patent—842,154

22 January 1907



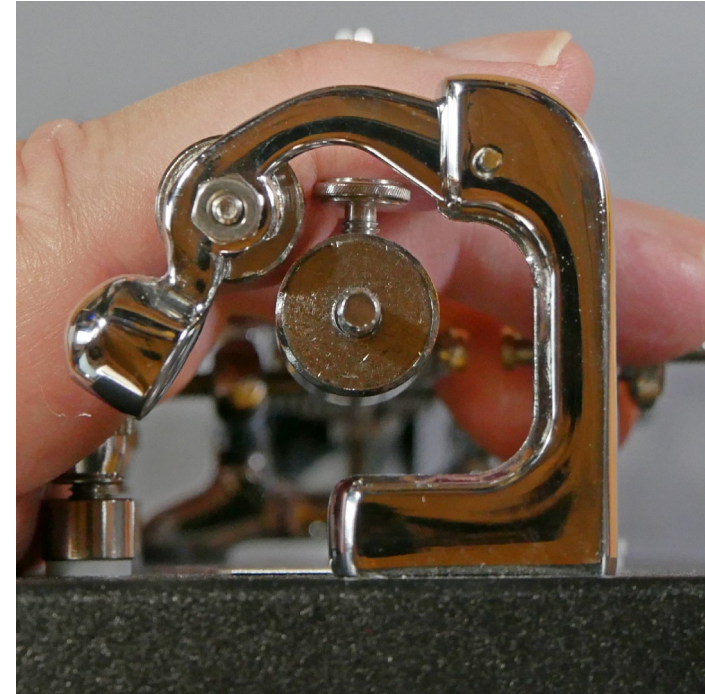


Fig. 3

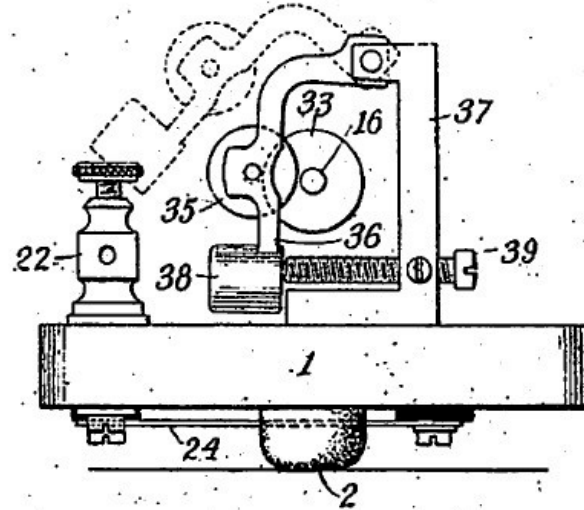
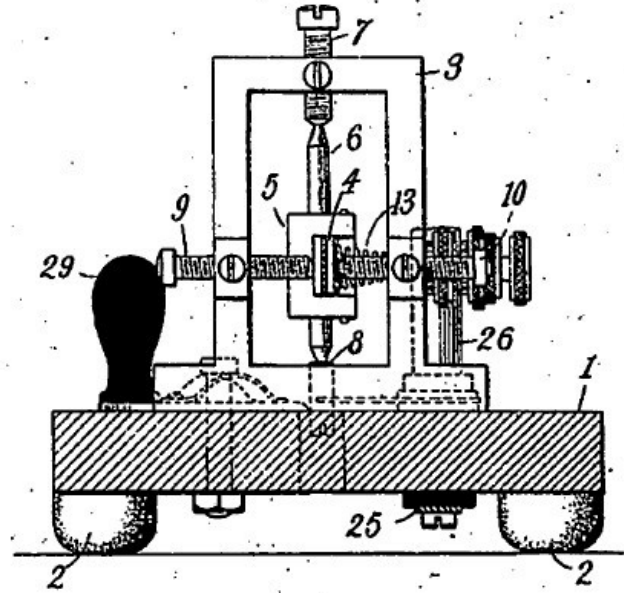


Fig. 2

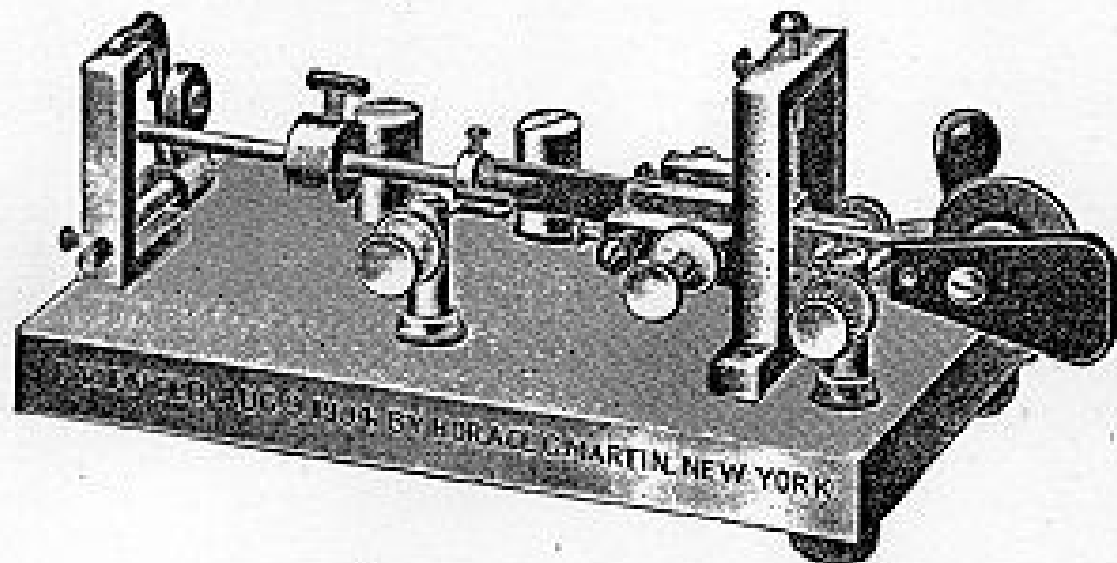


the lever flexible, as it were. This construction is simple, positive, and certain in operation and produces an instrument pleasing in appearance and easy to operate. It is clear,

MARTIN'S

VIBROPLEX

The Perfect
Transmitter



Operated without a battery; embodies all of the essential features of Martin's famous Auto-plex.

Scientifically constructed, it will carry on the longest of circuits.

Its signals can instantly be made light or heavy, slow or fast.

Its touch is easy and elastic, and adjustable to suit the sender.

IT IS EASY TO LEARN— A
PLEASURE TO USE.

If you have lost your grip—
If it tires you to work the Morse key—
If you have a heavy, exacting sending trick—
If you wish to send perfect Morse at any speed,

Write for circulars containing description and testimonials.

You Need a

VIBROPLEX

For it makes the dots.

UNITED ELECTRICAL MANUFACTURING CO., Inc.

53 Vesey Street

New York

SUPERINTENDENTS OF RAILWAY TELEGRAPH

READ WHAT OPERATORS SAY REGARDING

THE VIBROPLEX

In every branch of the telegraphic service the VIBROPLEX has proven to be a dividend producer; its use should therefore be encouraged.

In actual service the VIBROPLEX HOLDS ALL SPEED RECORDS.

This little instrument is so simple and has such a small number of parts that the liability to get out of order is reduced to a minimum. It has all the good features of the old style key, yet saves two-thirds the labor in sending.

Read what Mr. M. E. Farwell, train dispatcher of the Canadian Pacific, Winnipeg, Manitoba, has to say concerning the Vibroplex:

United Electrical Mfg. Co.,
New York City, N. Y.

Winnipeg, Manitoba, May 16, 1906.

Dear Sirs:

Although I still have a good grip on the Morse key, have not used one for over a year. I find the Vibroplex a great labor-saving device and cannot say too much in its praise. Most of my work is sending—eight hours—and when through the day's work, the ease with which it is done makes me feel thankful, indeed, for the invention of this little instrument. Besides the ease of doing the work, much better and more speedy Morse is transmitted than can possibly be done by the most expert senders on the old style key.

I find the Vibroplex easily adjusted to suit all wire conditions, and the sending carries perfectly over our longest circuits.

The Vibroplex is UNDOUBTEDLY THE ONLY PERFECT TRANSMITTER MANUFACTURED.

Yours truly,

M. E. FARWELL,

Train Dispatcher, Canadian Pacific Railway Co.

Mr. R. H. Johnson, of the Postal Telegraph-Cable Co., New York city, one of the finest operators in this country, writes:

United Electrical Mfg. Co.,
New York City.

New York City, N. Y., June 7, 1906.

Dear Sirs:

The VIBROPLEX on the lengthiest and fastest long-distance commercial wire in the world ought to be the best testimonial a sending machine could get.

Have used the VIBROPLEX on the Postal New York-San Francisco circuit for some time. The man on the other end says it comes through much more evenly and solidly than hand sending. The Martin sending machine has been my mainstay ever since its invention, when it was the only machine of the kind manufactured. On one occasion my partner, Mr. James H. Nance, and myself, on the famous "A" Boston bonus wire got away with 820 messages in a little over eight hours with some wire trouble in the meantime. In one of these hours Mr. Nance sent me 122 messages with the Vibroplex.

THEY ARE THE ONLY THING FOR A MAN IN ANY BRANCH OF THE TELEGRAPHIC SERVICE.

Respectfully yours,

ROSCOE H. JOHNSON.

About fifteen months ago this company commenced the manufacture of dry batteries, the idea being to produce cells which would meet all the exacting requirements in the various uses to which dry cells are put. In pursuance of this policy two distinct types of cells were designed.

For ignition service, such as sparking automobiles, track cars, and gas and gasoline engines of all kinds, the AUTOPLEX cell is especially built. This cell is also admirably adapted to telephonic service.

No. 6 Autoplex cell, size 2½ in. x 6 in., packed 125 to the barrel, fifteen cents each.

For bells, annunciators, telephones, medical coils and all open circuit work our UNECO cell meets every requirement.

No. 6 Uneco, size 2½ in. x 6 in., packed 125 to the barrel, 11½ cents each.

Great care is exercised in the manufacture of our cells and we use nothing but the purest chemicals. Their quality is pretty well proven by the rapid growth of our battery business. For the first few months our output was only 25 or 50 cells a day, but it didn't take the consumer long to find out that we were making a first-class article, and at the present time our daily output runs into the thousands.

Further, we desire to say that we are well equipped to manufacture electrical and mechanical apparatus, either on contract or royalty, and to execute general experimental work.

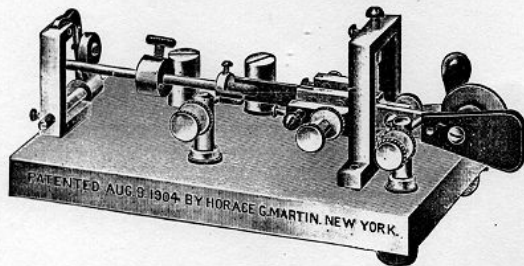
UNITED ELECTRICAL MFG. CO., 53 Vesey Street, New York

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

THE VIBROPLEX for the next 30 days will be sold at . . . \$5.00

The demand is going to be large

DO NOT DELAY. SEND IN YOUR ORDER NOW.



We are determined to place in every telegraph office in the United States and Canada at least one VIBROPLEX in order to demonstrate its superiority over all other sending machines, and we are willing to sacrifice profits to accomplish this purpose.

For the next thirty days we will fill all orders for the Vibroplex at the ridiculously low price of \$5.00.

Our perfect manufacturing facilities enable us to make this offer. Our plant occupies 10,000 square feet of floor space, fully equipped with new and up-to-date machinery, which is devoted exclusively to the manufacture of electrical and mechanical apparatus.

WRITE US FOR PRICES ON ANYTHING. WE WILL SAVE YOU MONEY.

United Electrical Manufacturing Company

HORACE G. MARTIN,

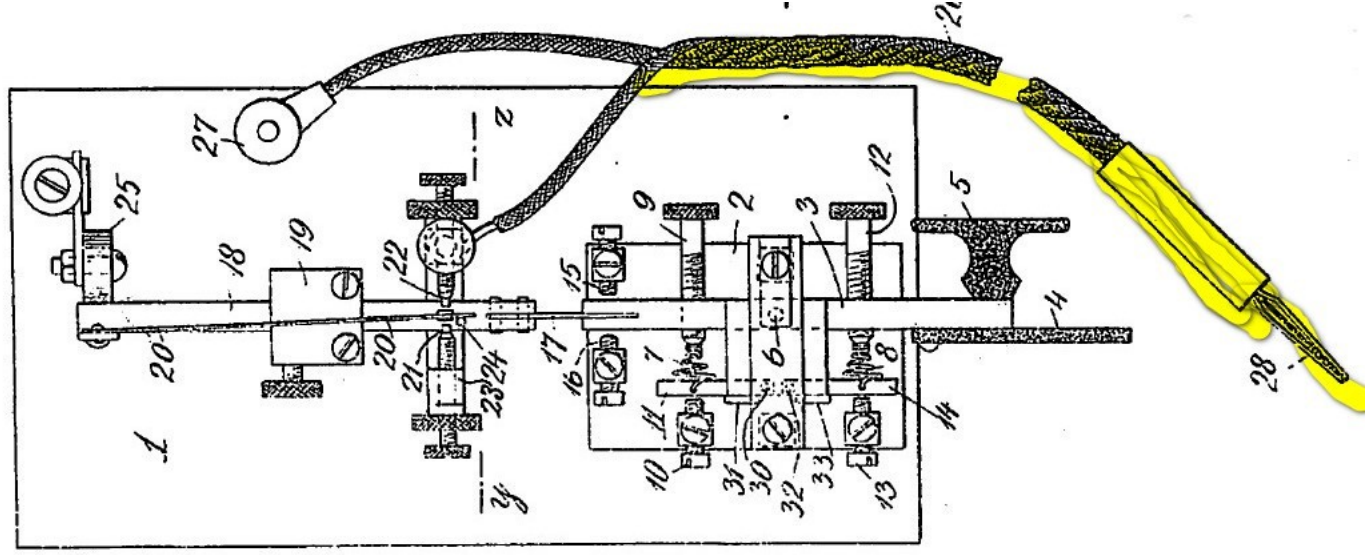
Vice-President and General Manager

53 Vesey Street, New York

4th ("unknown") Patent, #1,042,457, 29 Oct 1912

1,042,457.

Fig. 1.



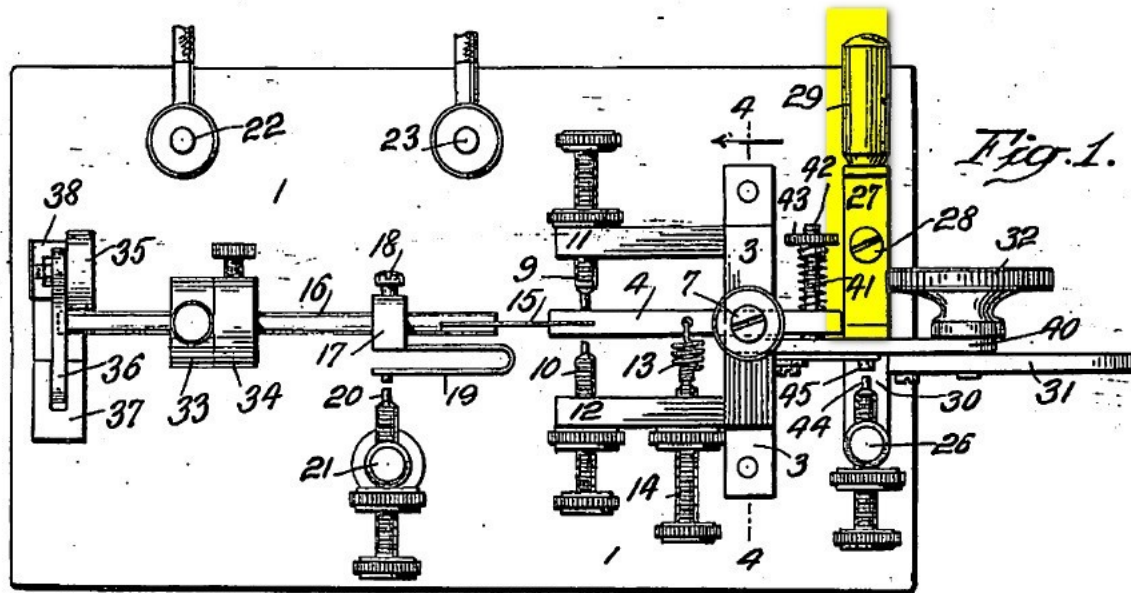
Feb. 13, 1923.

1,445,226

H. G. MARTIN

SEMI-AUTOMATIC TELEGRAPHIC SENDING MACHINE

Filed Dec. 10, 1921



The Oldest Name in Amateur Radio

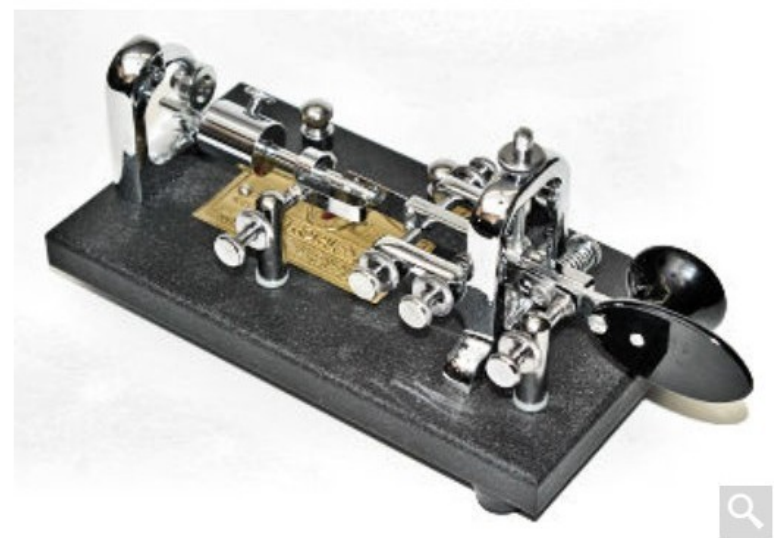
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Original Standard

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★★★★★ (8)

Part Number: VIB-ORIGINAL-S



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360°



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Original Standard Bug, Semi-automatic Key, Black Base, Chrome Hardware, Black Paddle, Spring Tension, Each [See More Specifications](#)

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