

THE HENDERSHOT MOTOR RIDDLE
BY Gaston Burrige
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(This article is basically a rewrite of the earlier article in Round Robin transcribed above, but written in the second person and with a decidedly more negative flavor towards Hendershot. To avoid duplication, I have only included extracts in this article that were not presented in the previous text.)

In reference to Hendershot's accident:

"In a recent letter Mr. George Swetnam, long associated with The Pittsburgh Press and considered by some to be an authority on early Hendershot matters, writes, 'The story died suddenly, behind a curtain of red faces. It was a lunacy test, not any 2000 volt shock, that took Hendershot to a hospital. He wasn't a nut, but because of the desire to escape publicity he wasn't prosecuted.'

In reference to the components of the Mark III device:

"The Hendershot device consists of some basket-woven FLAT coils of wire. There is a relationship between the distance these coils are placed apart, the number of turns wound on them and the size of the wire. There are some stainless steel rings about three inches in diameter....."

In reference to coil burn out:

"If I don't get on enough wire, the job soon burns out - sometimes in a few minutes, other times in a few hours."

In reference to Dr. Hochstetter.

"Soon after the story broke...a Dr. F. W. Hochstetter, reportedly the director of a research laboratory in Pittsburgh, sent the following telegram to Major Lanphier and others in Detroit. 'Before committing yourselves to any statement in reference to the Hendershot motor, please communicate with the undersigned or W. C. Trees of this city, as we have had some negotiations with this man on what appears, from newspaper reports, to have been the same thing he is now seeking to promote and which proved worthless.'"

"Mr. Swetnam indicates that a model torn down at a Pittsburgh laboratory (Hochstetter's?) very cleverly used the innocent looking screws which appeared to hold the device to its wooden base, for binding posts! These carried outside current into the device."

"The Detroit Free Press carried a story, date-lined Pittsburgh, to the effect that Dr. Hochstetter's attorney, Mr. E. H. Wicks, displayed to newsmen there a contract said to have been signed by Hendershot and an associate, (Peat?) which covered the sale of an earlier model of the Hendershot device to J. C. Trees and W. L. Benedum. The amount mentioned in the contract was \$150,000, of which Wicks claimed, \$25,000 had already been paid to Hendershot and his co-worker. Hendershot denied categorically knowing either person."