

MUSEUM NOTES

BY JOHN PHIPPS

One of the most notable additions to the Museum in recent months is a set of weights and measures. These came to us from the Physics Department of the University of Iowa, Iowa City. They were issued to the state of Iowa by the U. S. Bureau of Standards in November, 1856, to be used as a means of standardizing weights and measures at the county level.

The set consists of liquid measures from a half-pint to the one gallon, a one-half bushel dry measure and metric measures of one litre and decalitre.

The weights cover a range from one-tenth ounce to fifty pounds avoirdupois, also a group of troy weights up to one pound troy and metric weights of various sizes.

The linear measure consists of a standard yard that is accurate to one ten-thousandth of an inch at 62 degrees F. This yard is made of heavy brass and is calibrated in inches on one edge and centimeters on the other.

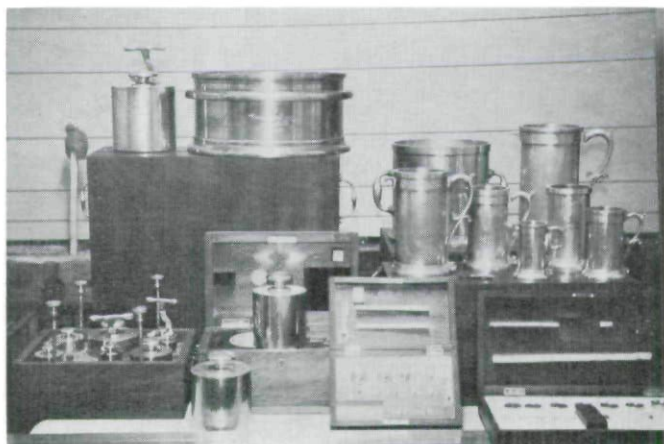


Photo by John Phipps

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

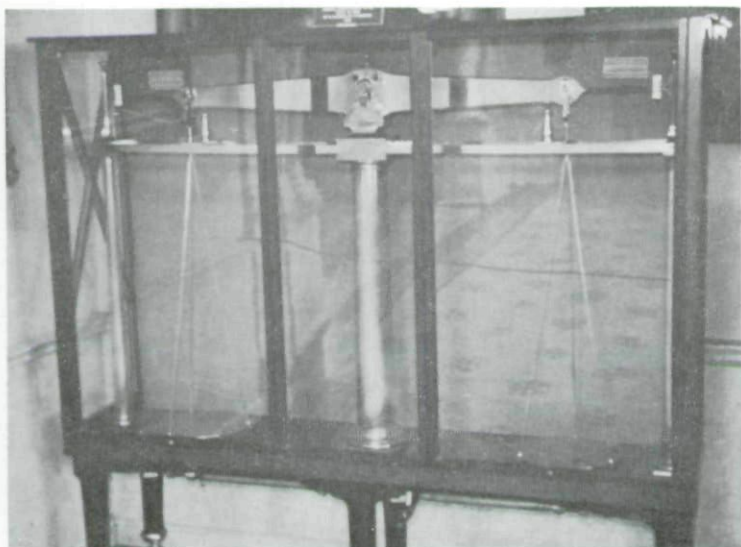


Photo by John Phipps

BALANCE SCALE

There are three beam balance scales of appropriate size to accommodate the various sets of weights. These are of very sturdy construction and are housed in cabinets to insure accuracy. The workmanship on all of this material is superb and is a joy to behold. The measures are of turned brass and each one has a notation as to the accuracy as compared to the standard in Washington. For instance, the notation on the gallon measure states that at a barometer reading of 30 inches of mercury and a 62 degree temperature, with two comparisons, this measure contained .0864 grains of water less than the standard gallon. This degree of accuracy is held throughout the entire set. Warnings that handling will destroy the accuracy are also posted in each fitted case.

The scales are already on display on the third floor and the other items will be as soon as a suitable case can be constructed for their protection.

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