

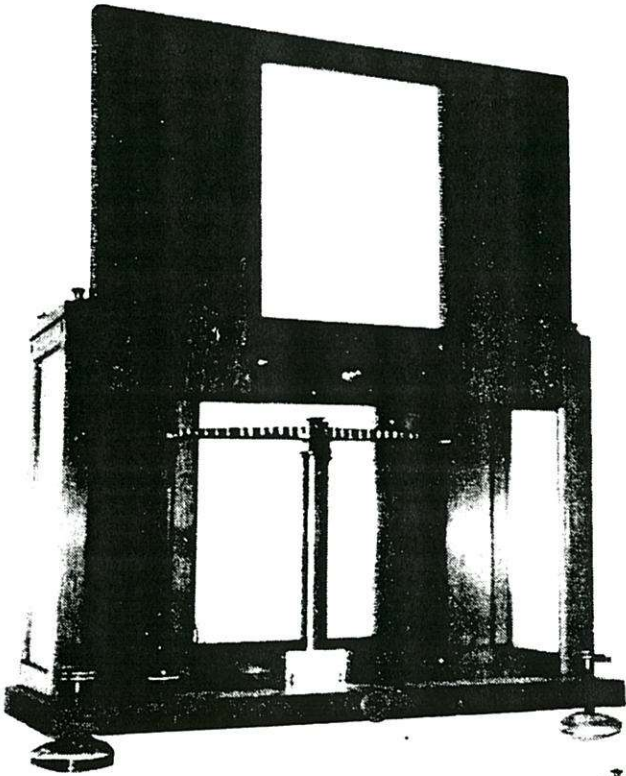
A Traveling Assayer's Scale

by Don and Dave White

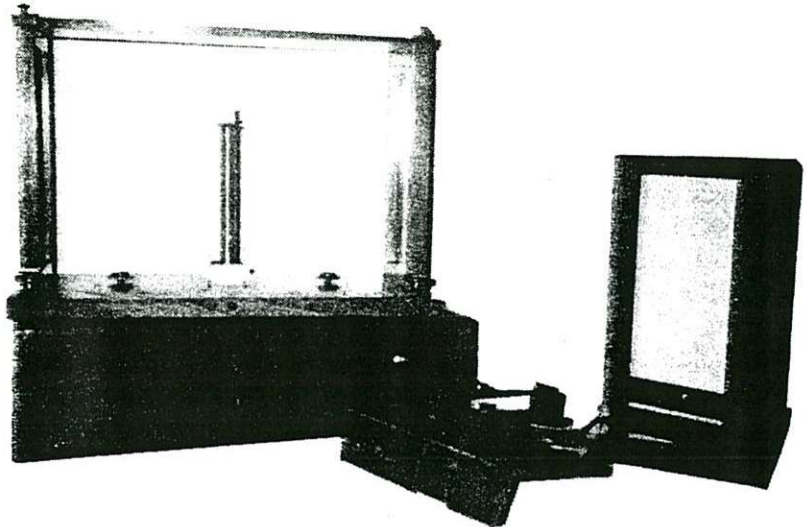
We recently obtained the balance-beam scale illustrated and have been unable to locate any specific information about it. Perhaps one of the MAC readers could help in identifying this uniquely hand-crafted collapsible scale with a leather carrying case.

The ivory tag mounted to the beam post identifies the maker as BECKER & SONS, NEW-YORK.

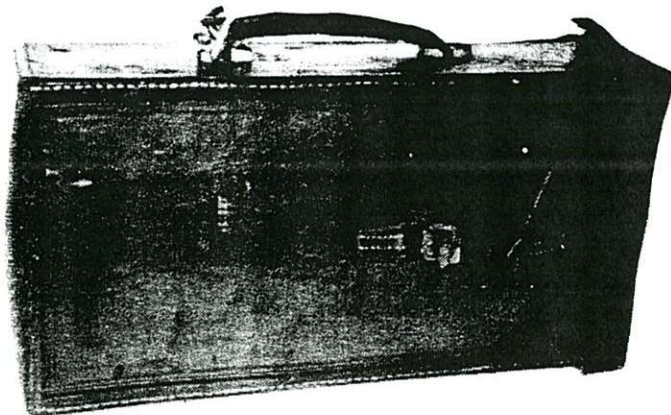
The cabinet to the left measures 14-3/4" W x 10-3/16" H x 6-3/4" D. The cabinet is made of mahogany. The glass appears to be early because of the imperfections in its surface. The base is made of steel, the 1-5/8" pans appear to be nickeled tin or silver. Other metal components are brass.



What makes this scale so unique is that it completely dismantles. All metal components fit into a form fitting wood holder. The front and rear cabinet doors are hinged and fold to half their original width. All of the components insert (in jig-saw fashion) into the wood box pictured to the right (directly under the cabinet).



Once all the components are placed in the box, the cabinet base inverts and acts as the box lid and is locked in place by slide locks. The box is then inserted into the leather case and it is then ready for travel. The leather case measures: 16" x 8 1/4" x 4-5/8".



The verbal history that came with the scale indicated that it was used by a traveling assayer in the Gold Fields of Canada in the late 1800s.