

# The Archbolder

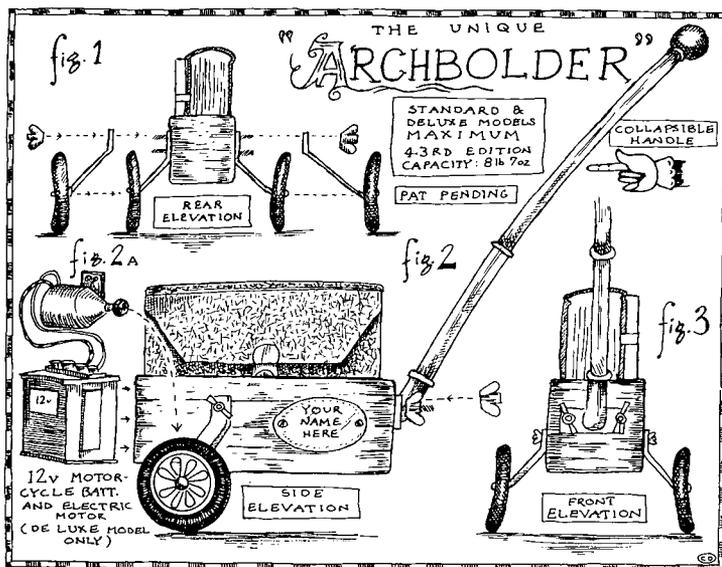
"Wearing all that weight of learning lightly, like a flower"

If Tennyson had *Archbold* in mind, it must have been a very early edition; for the weight of learning in it is now quite exceptional. My relationship with *Archbold* began when it was in its early 30s and I was in my early 20s. Our association has been a close one; and as the years have passed, surprisingly, our numbers begin to reach equality. Rather less surprisingly, both our weights have gradually increased. I firmly believe, however, it is not simply my own increasing girth which causes me to pant so heavily upon reaching the Robing Room. It is partly the greatly increased weight of my companion, *Archbold*.

The approximate figures back up my belief; 39th edition approximately 5lbs weight; 40th edition approximately 5 1/2 lbs weight; 41st edition just under 6 lbs; 42nd edition 6 lbs, including supplement. The 43rd, published in November is in two volumes and weighs 8lbs 7 oz.

It was lightheartedly suggested to me, when I discussed in the Robing Room the increased weight which the criminal practitioner was expected to carry that the publishers were aiming to offset the increase in weight of the book by a corresponding lightening of the wallet! But the problem, in truth, is a real one; how is the criminal man to cope with Robes, notebook, heavy *Archbold*, and sometimes authorities too?

It was thus with enthusiasm that I recently undertook a long term Circuit test of the new *ARCHBOLDER*. This cunning device (in effect no more than a tailor-made trolley) almost completely relieves the user of the burden of carrying *Archbold*. It comes in two models, the standard, which I tested, and the deluxe electrically powered. The standard model comprises a small oak carrying box, with removable out-rigger wheels. To the front of the box is attached a collapsible handle which enables the trolley to be wheeled along behind the user. The diagram shows the *ARCHBOLDER*'s full specifications and the photograph shows the *ARCHBOLDER* in use outside a set of Chambers in Manchester.



The standard model, which I tested over several weeks up and down many streets and Court corridors, proved almost entirely satisfactory in use. Negligible effort was required to pull *Archbold* when mounted in its carrier, and the assembly of the *ARCHBOLDER* took, after some little practice, hardly more than a minute. I had two complaints only: that in the wet, the book tended to get splashed when being pulled at foot level; and there was some difficulty in negotiating long flights of stairs. Originally, I tried to lift the *ARCHBOLDER* complete with the book up flights of stairs. But having discussed the matter with the designer, I learnt simply to ease the whole trolley gently up each step. Although this required a little practice, it makes the ascent of short flights of stairs relatively easy. I maintain, however, that long flights of steps remain something of a problem.

The deluxe, electrically powered model (Diagram 2) is rather wickedly recommended in the catalogue as "suitable for Silks and elderly Juniors." It is fitted with a small 12 volt motor cycle battery, driving an electric motor which rubs against one outrigger wheel. The designer asserts (and I see no reason to doubt this) that one charging will power the deluxe *ARCHBOLDER* for six hours of continuous use: more than enough for several days' work.

The *ARCHBOLDER* was conceived, designed and constructed by a criminal practitioner on the Northern Circuit. Each one individually made to the customer's requirements, though there is a range of standard optional extras. The photograph depicts the *ARCHBOLDER* in its 43rd edition capacity; design alterations are in hand to cope with the new two-volume edition.

The standard range of optional extras includes a small copper plate for the "Circuit engraving" of the owner's initials and a leather cloth tonneau cover. This extra would in fact completely have met one of my complaints with the standard version.

And the price of this useful accessory? £75 for the standard version; £150 for the deluxe model. It is assumed that both prices would be fully allowable against Tax, as the *ARCHBOLDER* must surely be considered to be wholly and exclusively used for the purpose of practice at the Bar.

The designer will be pleased to deal with any enquiries, which should be directed through the Clerk to Chambers, 28 St. John Street, Manchester M3 4DJ. □ Howard Bentham

(Reprinted with the kind permission of Counsel).