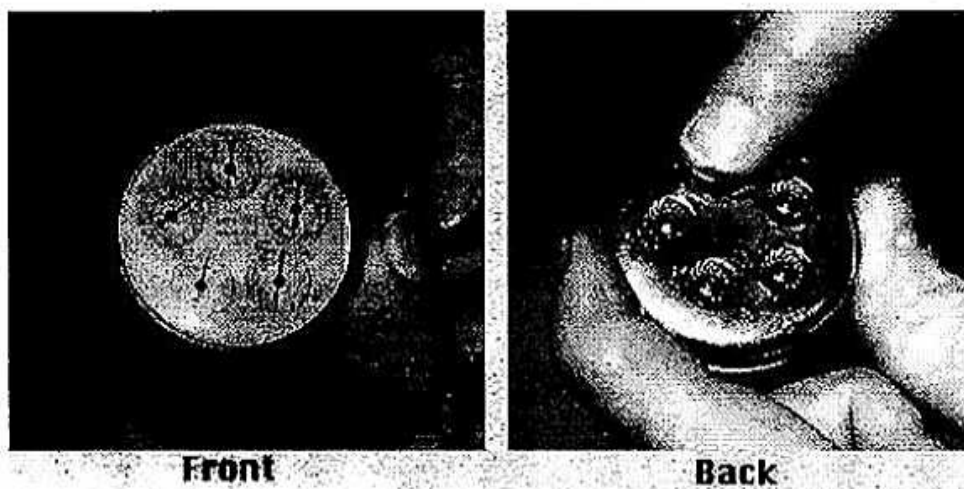


## Pocket Cash Registers



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For the sophisticated man or woman of 1900 who had everything, pocket cash registers were meant to be prestigious, helpful devices. For several years I have had this "money calculator" made by the American Register Co., Patent Pending. I never knew exactly what to call it until I located another small type adding machine, a Sebastian Pocket Cash Register.

Bob Otnes in California also has a Sebastian machine and he was very helpful in sending me the patent papers on this device. The patent papers explained what this machine was called and its uses.

The American Register machine has 5 dials - one cent, ten cents, one dollar, ten dollars, and hundred dollars. Each dial carries over to the next dial. It is well-made, similar to an expensive watch. It has small knurled knobs on the back to turn with your fingers. It is very difficult to use and is doubtful if many were ever made. It was much more expensive than the Sebastian device and this is the only one in existence that I know of.

In the patent papers of C. Sebastian, 1898, he reported he had many objectives in mind when he invented the device. He wanted to construct a new improvement in pocket registers which were cheap, compact, simple, and easy to manipulate. Sebastian also wanted it to be convenient to carry in the vest pocket or carry as a charm on a watch chain, where it was always in a readily accessible position.

His device registered up to ten dollars but in the patent papers he states he doesn't limit it to ten dollars. It has a cent wheel with teeth on the side to manipulate it. Turn it clockwise to add and turn it counter-clockwise to subtract. Below the cent wheel is the dollar disk that carries over from the cent wheel.

The particular Sebastian machine I acquired says "Souvenir of Louisiana Purchase, St. Louis Exposition, 1904." It is constructed of brass. On the other side with the dials it says "Add & Sub, Patented April 26, 1898." I'm sure that Mr. C. Sebastian, inventor/ entrepreneur from St. Louis, was able to sell some of his machines at the St. Louis

Exposition of 1904. The only other Sebastian machine I know of, (Bob Otones' machine) is nickel-plated.

From the small number of these little machines known today it is doubtful that they were very successful. If you have one, or know of any I'd appreciate information on it.

[Back to main index](#)

