

## DENT Press Release: The Denison Watch and Other Projects

The history of DENT & Co. spans three centuries of precision watch and clock making in Great Britain. Established in 1814 by Edward J. Dent, the company embraced the Victorian fervour for technological innovation and created precision chronometers to navigate the Royal Navy and guide some of the most intrepid explorers on their voyages. Dent proved a key player in Victorian horological history by manufacturing the Standard Clock at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich which was to keep Greenwich Mean Time, the time to which all others in the Empire



were referred and continued to do so until replaced by an electronic clock in 1946. DENT supplied Standard Clocks to countries such as Switzerland, Italy, Spain, Belgium, Russia, USA and Japan throughout the 19th century. DENT also made a secondary Standard Clock which was responsible for sending the signal for the emission of the 6 'pips' heard on the BBC World Service and first broadcast in 1924 and used until 1946.



DENT also made probably the most famous clock in the world - the Great Clock for the Houses of Parliament, familiarly known as Big Ben. Three famous clock makers submitted tenders for the prestigious construction and Sir George Airy awarded the contract to DENT in 1852, yet another acknowledgement of the company's excellent reputation and a unique opportunity to be identified with London's most symbolic architectural feature.



DENT chronometers accompanied some of the century's most influential explorers: N<sup>o</sup> 633 was taken aboard the H.M.S. Beagle in 1831 to accompany Charles Darwin on the voyage that led to his revolutionary publication "The Origin of the Species". Two decades later, David Livingstone purchased DENT chronometer no. 1800 for his African explorations and in 1890, the explorer H.M. Stanley was moved to write to Dent that "the Chronometers supplied by you, and which were taken across Africa in my last Expedition, proved a very great service to me and were in every way thoroughly satisfactory and reliable".



DENT was afforded a Royal Warrant as the official watch and clockmaker to Her Majesty Queen Victoria and HRH Albert Prince of Wales in 1841 – a warrant that would be renewed through to George V's reign. Russian emperors Tsar Alexander III and Tsar Nicolas II and the Japanese Emperor Meiji also issued DENT with royal warrants.

The DENT trademark, the triangle below, was instituted in 1876 and has since appeared on back of all watches and clocks: the sign of genuine DENT timepieces.

The company re-launched in 2007 by a team of British investors and British management, seeking to continue the legacy of the company.

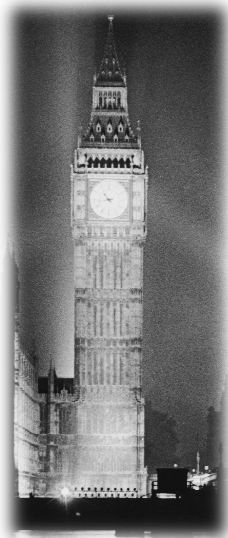
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2011 sees the advent of DENT's Denison watch, an elegant evening watch, whose case contains DENT's new in-house movement and represents a major departure from – and perfect complement to – DENT's established lines of the Parliament and the Ministry watches.

### *Who Was Denison?*

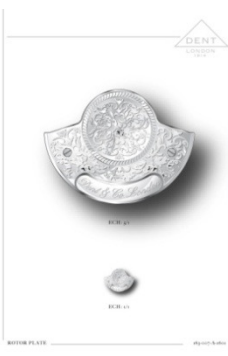


Edmund Denison worked closely with Edward John DENT and was responsible for the design of the mechanism of the Clock in the Tower at the Palace of Westminster. Despite this accolade, Denison appears to have been a difficult individual and certainly had differences of opinion with Mr DENT. Indeed, the ill-feeling extended well beyond the founder's death: Denison convinced EJ DENT's (alcoholic) son Frederick, who inherited the company, to write a will in which he (Denison) became his sole beneficiary, thus inheriting the company. The will was challenged in court and Denison lost the case.



Another example of unscrupulous behaviour may be found in the incident of Denison's convincing a worker from the Whitechapel Bell foundry, which cast the bells for the Tower at the Palace of Westminster, to perjure himself in Denison's defence. The hapless individual stated under oath (and Denison's direction) that the crack which appeared in Big Ben two months after going into service was a consequence of poor casting and not the fact that Denison had employed a hammer recommended for use with a bell of twice Big Ben's mass. Denison lost the ensuing court case.

The term "to grimthorpe", a reference to Denison's Barony, became architectural vernacular in the mid-nineteenth century, meaning the undertaking of inappropriate renovations to old buildings: despite this unfortunate use of Denison's name, DENT's management believes that the design of the Denison is understated to perfection, is an excellent complement to the existing lines and a sympathetic recognition of Denison's contribution to the installation of DENT's iconic clock.



The input that Denison made towards Big Ben is difficult to overstate. The requirements of the design brief stipulated that, in effect, a new level of accuracy among tower clocks was being sought. Many horologists considered this an impossible achievement, but Denison was more optimistic in his outlook. Indeed, he evidently regarded the challenge of its impossibility as one to be overcome. In doing so, he designed the double three-legged gravity escapement, considered to be one of the most significant breakthroughs in the history of horology.

Denison's style may not have been to everyone's taste, and he seldom spoke with respect for the listeners' feelings, but his uncompromising stance also meant that he was arguably at his best when the cause seemed most lost.

Limited to 100 pieces in 18k white gold and 100 in rose gold and available strictly to order, the Denison is an exclusive and refined watch and considered to be appropriate testament to its namesake, his turbulent relationship with EJ Dent notwithstanding.

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An exquisite design, coupled with DENT first in-house movement for over 40 years, means that the Denison is truly a landmark addition to DENT's iconic watch ranges and that the purchase of a Denison is a purchase of a piece of DENT's rich history.

This new movement represents a major development and investment for DENT; a unique mechanical movement, not yet seen before. The development and creation of this movement was inspired by the types of movements made by DENT during the 19th Century.

While at once honouring DENT's history, the manufacture of this movement also uses modern principles of functionality making the movement both accurate and reliable.

The bridges are finished in a style typical of the era the movement evokes: their surfaces are sandblasted and their engraving is undertaken entirely by hand.

The colour of the bridges is identical to that used in our original movements, called yellow apple. The rotor is decorated with a floral engraving, which is undertaken entirely by hand by an expert engraver.

The polished bridge screws are made from blued steel, which has been heat-treated, as was customary during the period.

The strictly limited number of Denisons which are being produced means that they are commissioned as they are ordered: a 50% deposit against the \$39,950 retail price of the watch is required in advance. The lead time on delivery is approximately 6 months, a reflection of DENT's – and Mr Denison's – fastidious commitment to excellence.

### *DENT Classe A Movement*

Hour hand	Centre
Minute hand	Centre
Second hand	Centre
Date indicator	Aperture
Diameter	25.6mm
Thickness	25.6mm

Plate and bridges manufactured from brass

42 hour power reserve  
28,800 vibrations per hour

Number of rubies	21
Manual winding	Crown (position 1)
Change date	Crown (position 2)
Change hour	Crown (position 3)
Accuracy	15 seconds per day

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## *The Royal Clock Tower Mantel Clock*



With such a rich heritage in the area, it would be remiss of DENT to let the arrival of the new watch distract overt attention from the architectural and mantel clock arenas, in which the Company continues to thrive.

DENT is currently constructing a superb mantel clock in celebration of the construction of the Royal Mecca Clock as part of the Abraj Al-Bait development in Saudi Arabia. The development, when completed, will incorporate over 16,000,000 square feet of floorspace, comprising a four-storey shopping mall, car parking for over 1,000 vehicles, two helipads and a conference centre.



The clock emulates the clock tower as closely as possible – no mean feat, given that the dial is approximately 530m above the ground – incorporating all the detail surrounding the four dials, the spire extending to 71m above the clock and the highest residential floor (at a height of 450m).

This mantel clock is an example of DENT's ability to move quickly and create a bespoke piece to order, within a reasonable budget and to a tight deadline. At the same time, we refuse to compromise on the high quality of our products, meaning that the finish of the clock is a true and honourable reflection of the original.



The clock tower houses an original movement, developed especially for this project and the completed clock is over 1m in height. Other interesting features include the clock's adjustment operations being stationed at its base and LEDs within the tower allowing it to change colour (another emulation of the original, which turns green at night).

Demonstrating that DENT has the capability to carry out precise instructions for exacting clients to tight deadlines and whilst incorporating client-specific technologies (such as the bespoke movement), the Royal Mecca Clock may require a big space to justify its mantel existence, but it is a clock of which DENT is justifiably proud.

This clock is sold exclusively through:

Barakat Jewellery  
Al Sayed building  
Olaya street (near Faisalia building)  
Riyadh KSA

Tel: +966 12 163 666

As with all of DENT's mantel clocks, there is a lead time of several months on this clock and a deposit is required with the order. However, the buyer can be assured that they will be purchasing a unique piece of horological engineering which will dominate any room in which it sits.

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## *Monumental Clocks for Developing Democracies*



Big Ben is an iconic element of the London skyline and DENT is always striving to create similarly evocative installations throughout the world. Where Paris has the Eiffel Tower and New York has the Statue of Liberty or the Empire State Building, so an installation of the type illustrated here (which are designed to be over 30m high) will become a defining characteristic of the city in which it is installed.

The importance of time is vital to the concepts of commerce and national industrialisation. As a consequence, it is difficult to conceive of an industrial revolution without, where necessary, a cultural revolution in respect of appreciation of the notion of time, its universal qualities and the marked improvements that a superior appreciation of its existence can provide.



DENT is committed to providing iconic installations to developing democracies, for which an improved understanding of the concept of time will be a pillar to their commercial aspirations in the future. Concepts which many countries and cultures take for granted, through the universal availability of mobile phones and the social or commercial importance of punctuality, may be unheard of in developing nations. A DENT installation can pioneer a cultural transformation by demonstrating that time has an important place physically and socially (as the monument becomes a meeting- and focus-point) as well as commercially.

Built to last for literally centuries, DENT horological installations stand for generations and may be considered symbolic of seismic shifts in cultures which are looking forward to ascension onto the global stage. While understanding time will not, of itself, achieve that aim, the importance of that appreciation is difficult to overstate and such advances simply cannot be made without it.

It has been stated that the sound of Big Ben tolling the hours is indelibly associated with peace, democracy, hope and stability. As developing democracies strive for the same, DENT hopes to be able to do its part in supporting this effort. By installing a monument for a nation to treasure, to become a focal point, a source of pride and instilling a sense of community, such a clock may also become the defining image of a nation seeking change for the better and continued peace.

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For further information about any DENT products or installations, please contact Will Elgood, Director of International Sales & Strategy, on +44 20 7873 2363, or [we@dentlondon.com](mailto:we@dentlondon.com)







**DENT**  
LONDON  
1814  
The Makers of Big Ben

