

Printing press, Cartwright's printworks, Willenhall



Operational information kindly provided by John Fisher

In this case, the operator stands facing the machine at the left of the photo. The cast iron 'bed' is supported between the two upright castings and reaches beyond the photo on the right and will be supported from the floor. Between the upright castings is a heavy beam which can move up and down in the side castings. At the bottom front edge of this beam is a steel knife, bolted on by several bolts to facilitate removal for sharpening - on the front edge.

The operator pushes his paper stack under the knife beam and having marked the cutting position he contacts an upright 'backstop'. This is moved back and forth by the small hand-wheel, just under the front of the bed, through a unit threaded onto the long screw seen under the 'Harrild plate at photo right. After establishing his cut position relative to the knife blade, he rotates the large wheel above him with the drop handles. This screws down a heavy clamping beam which securely holds the paper stack, preventing movement on the cut.

The cutting cycle is commenced by rotating the large crank handle and heavy flywheel. The pinion gear on this shaft meshes with the large toothed gear which activates the mechanism for lowering and raising the knife beam to its top position, helped by the oval eccentric counterweights. To cut the bottom sheet in the stack without damage to the blade it kisses into a hardwood strip let into a groove in the bed.