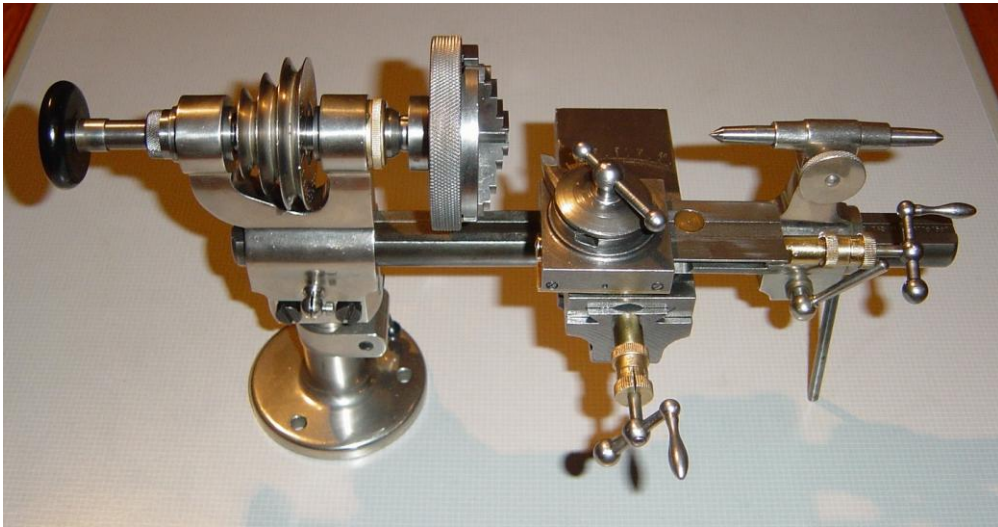




Watchmaker's Lathe

Watchmaker's or instrument lathes were manufactured by the British Tabulating Machine Company Ltd. in quite large numbers between 1939 and 1945 mainly for use by the Services for maintenance and repair of mechanical instruments. Different finishes were produced, with many having black crackle or drab green paint. Nickel plated examples, typically made for the civilian market, have also been found bearing the Air Ministry mark on both the bed and wooden case. When hostilities ended these lathes continued to be available from the London material houses and machine tool dealers including E.H. Jones, some still bearing markings of their military origins.



As with many other British machines of this era, the BTM was a close copy of a highly successful German design, in this case by G. Boley.



The lathes were supplied as complete outfits in beautifully made fitted wooden cases with blocks in the lids to hold all the accessories in position. Standard equipment included a gap bed for the turning of large diameters in addition to the usual straight bed. A 'dead' headstock to match the tailstock permitted the lathe to be used as turns with a variety of different runners.

These lathes are very attractive propositions because of the comprehensive level of equipment supplied. The compound slide being particularly desirable for its excellent tool-holding method and conventional screw-feed direction (unlike similar Lorch lathes which feed in the reverse direction). A Burnerd scroll chuck with reversible jaws, a good range of collets and a variety of drive pulleys / centres meant that a wide range of jobs could be tackled with the standard set.

