Aids to wool pressing and handling

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In repetitional work, anything which economises in movement or saves a few seconds on each operation can result in worthwhile reductions in time and labour over a period. The Materials Handling Branch of the Commonwealth Department of National Development recently published the following suggestions for improving wool-pressing and handling methods.

HINGED LOOSE PIECE FOR WOOL PRESS

Several popular wool presses of the manually operated two box type, have the bottom box constructed with two opposite sides lower than the other two. Two boards, each approximately 28in x 7½in. x 1½in. are provided to fit onto the lower sides and when in position, all four sides are of the same height.

These boards, known as "loose pieces," are held in position by locking bars. The bars also secure the flaps of the wool-pack which is arranged as a liner for the bottom box.

The "loose pieces" are left in position until the wool has been compressed to the desired extent. Then, before the tension is released in the ropes holding the monkey-plate, the locking bars and the "loose pieces" are removed and usually dropped onto the floor or carried and placed temporarily out of the way of further operations.

The "loose pieces" are removed to enable the loose cap of the wool pack to be fastened by short pins to the sides of the pack proper, or, if the capless pack method is used, to enable the long skewers to be inserted to hold down the wool while the pack is being fastened.

To eliminate the frequent handlings which are necessary when the orthodox type of "loose piece" is used, the hinged loose piece has been developed. (Figs. 1 and 2.)

The hinged loose piece does not involve any change in pressing techniques. The locking bar is still used to hold the hinged loose piece in position, but the operations of removing the "loose piece" and placing it on the floor and picking it up again are eliminated. Furthermore, the task of placing the "loose piece" into position for the purpose of filling the bottom box is greatly simplified.
WOOL PRESS MONKEY SUPPORT

An arduous and time-consuming task in the pressing of wool is the manual handling of the monkey. It is often possible to effect relatively simple modifications to some types of presses to enable the monkey to be supported by a counterweight.

The modification (see Figs. 3 and 4) enables the monkey, which may weigh 50 lb. or more, to be supported for ready use. This eliminates the need to lift the heavy monkey onto the top of the filled box and off again after the wool is pressed. In consequence two lifts are eliminated for each bale made.

The modification consists of a post on top of which is mounted a revolving cross-arm with pulleys fitted at each end. The post is fixed to a suitable corner of the wool press. A rope is attached to the monkey at a point of balance and passed over both pulleys and at its other end attached to a counterbalance weight which could be a bag of sand or earth. Supported in this way the monkey can be
raised or lowered easily to any required height or moved laterally away from the top of the wool-press box as necessary.

The post and cross arm can be constructed of either timber or steel as desired. A simple construction is shown.

STOP FOR HAND BRAKE LEVER FOR MANUAL TWO-BOX TYPE WOOL-PRESS

A number of manually operated two-box types of wool-presses are fitted with a hand brake which in the released position rests on the floor. Frequently the operator uses his foot to raise the lever to a convenient position to grasp it.

A simple steel bar fixed to the bearer (see Fig. 5), or a block wood fastened to the side of the bearer will hold the lever in a convenient position.

ATTACHMENT FOR EASY RELEASE OF WOOL PRESS PAWL

Some manually operated two-box type wool presses incorporating ratchet wheels and pawls call for the holding pawl to be disengaged by hand before tension can be released on the wire ropes attached to
the monkey plate. A simple modification to the holding pawl will permit it to be disengaged much more easily and safely.

This modification can be made by drilling and tapping the pawl and inserting a small diameter bolt of about 4in. diameter and 2in. long. See photograph. (Fig. 6.)

This same bolt also prevents the pawl from falling within the two steel supports which are attached to the lever arm. With this aid the pawl can be lifted clear of the supports as required and without the difficulty often experienced.

This simple and effective aid tends to make pressing easier and faster, and with less possible injury to the hand.

REBALING AIDS FOR HALF-CAPPED BALES

In displaying wool for sale a proportion of wool bales are half-capped, i.e. some of the fasteners are removed from the bale flaps so that approximately half of the top of the bale is opened (the remainder of the top of the bale is held by the rest of the fastened flaps).

After inspection by buyers and others a quantity of the wool is usually left on the floor in front of the bale. This is frequently replaced by hand and the flaps are brought together manually or aided by strainers.

One way to make space for replacing the wool removed from the bale is by the use of a 4in. x 1in dressed timber board, 36in. long which is pushed down between the wool and the pack with one of its flat sides against the pack. The board is turned through a right angle to form a
Fig. 9.—The steel rod type of strainer

pocket in the front of the bale (between the wool and the pack) into which a considerable amount of wool can be inserted by hand. A board with a handle is shown (Fig. 7) but frequently it may be used without a handle (Fig. 8.)

The wool is pushed well down each side of the board into the pocket and when sufficient has been inserted, the board is removed. The bale is left relatively even in shape. If necessary, some of the wool can be replaced into the hole on the top of the bale from which it was removed.

The flaps of the pack are then drawn over and fastened in the usual way. Strainers may be used to bring the flaps of the pack together as is the present custom.

**BALE FLAP STRAINERS FOR REBALING WOOL AFTER DISPLAY FOR SALE**

Bale flap strainers are frequently used in wool stores to draw together the flaps of bales which have been repacked by hand. Sometimes they are used to draw together (for resewing) those parts of the...
pack material which have been cut for inspection during display for sale or for sampling following sale.

Two forms of strainers in common use are shown. One consists of a pointed steel rod (Fig. 9) usually tempered spring steel, which is used to draw the flaps over each other and to simplify fastening with the usual metal bale fastener.

The second strainer is made to hook into opposite flaps which with the lever action incorporated in its design enables considerable tension to be applied and the flaps drawn over for fastening. (Fig. 10.)

The design of the second type of bale flap strainer varies. Usually the teeth on the top arm are pointed upwards so that when the flaps are drawn over they are kept apart a distance equal to the depth of the upper arm (about 1\frac{1}{2}in.) This often makes it difficult to insert the metal bale fasteners.

A study of the lever type strainer showed that the usual form could be modified to improve its effectiveness by setting the teeth in the top arm downwards and by lengthening the bottom arm.

By these modifications the material of the pack is kept close together when drawing one flap towards or over the other, and the pack material directly under the lengthened bottom arm is forced downwards. These changes make it easier to insert the fasteners, draw together the flaps and remove the strainer.

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