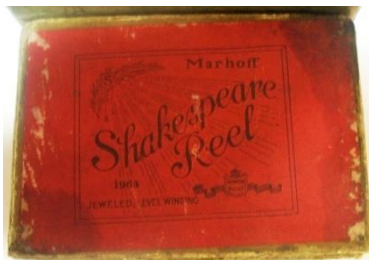


### Educated Guesses about Marhoff Reel Boxes

Shakespeare, unlike Pflueger, subcontracted printing. As a result, colors and fonts might change within a reel's production run, box inventory might out-pace or lag behind actual production, and stickers and labels might be over-pasted or otherwise added. What follows are my best guesses.

Early Marhoff Reel Co. (MRC) and Shakespeare reels were advertised as shipped in leather cases and/or wooden boxes. I have never seen an MRC box, and only one Shakespeare Marhoff wooden box (Robyn Summerlin collection), so I can't speak to any specifics. I can say that to ship a reel in a leather case and in a box requires a box bigger than a typical Marhoff box (3" W, 4 1/4" L, and 2 1/2" H). I have a late 1920's South Bend 1200 Level Wind in the box with a leather case. It measures 3 1/2" W, 4 5/8" L, and 3" H. I assume the same would be true for a Shakespeare Marhoff box with a leather case.

**Wooden Boxes:** It seems likely that the MRC and early Shakespeare Marhoff reels were shipped in wooden boxes, as appears to have been common around that time. I have only had the opportunity to see one such box. The latest patent on the box label was January 21, 1911. Until further box data is found, I estimate a similar box/label was used for the pre-1910 reels, and that the box pictured here was used well into the 1912 Model production run. The background reel print in blue shows a counter-balanced handle; it is possible an updated graphic with a double knobbed handle was used during the 1912 Model.



**Red Box:** My earliest paper box is red with gold trim and elaborate black graphics, especially on the box top. This box has a shallow bottom, and only a 3/4 depth top, so I assume there was an inner cardboard rim to keep it from hitting the reel. I didn't



see evidence of same on the only box I have. Graphics on one box bottom side lip suggest the box was designed primarily for display. I date this box for the 1914 - 1918 Model reels, and lean toward 1918.



**Gray Boxes:** The gray box came with the same elaborate top graphics but with green ink. They are typically found with 1922 and 1924 Model reels, although I am aware of two 1918 Model reels found in gray boxes. Both these examples have a small furl logo in the lower right corner as part of the box top graphics - the same graphics and ribbon logo found on the red box. I believe these were the first version gray boxes.



Appendix F: Marhoff Reel Box Progression

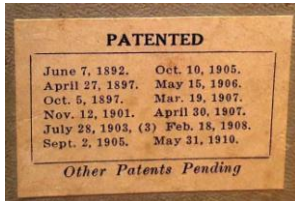


The second version gray box had the "Fine Fishing Tackle" oval logo in the lower right corner of the box top. The third version gray box has the same graphic (and lower right corner logo) but on one box top end panel (no box top graphics).



It does help that most of the gray boxes had a paste-on sticker on the bottom with a listing of Shakespeare patents. The benefit, assuming no one switched out a box bottom, is that the box so tagged probably does not pre-date (at least by much) the newest patent listed. On the other hand, a 'newest' patent date does not mean the box (or associated reel) is circa that patent date. In fact, the benefit of using a generic box is that it can be used over many years. This appears to be the story of the gray boxes.

Based on patent stickers, the gray box could have been used as early as late 1910 to well after 1925.



Based on my observations, the label progression by "newest" patent was:

1. 1910 - gray box versions one and two
2. 1924 - version two
3. 1925 - Versions two and three

My best guess is that the gray box was used post World War I, circa 1918 to 1926. I believe that the first version box was definitely used for the 1918 Model and possibly 1919. For the 1922 and 1924 Models, the second version box was used. During the Model 26 production (note Shakespeare changed the model reference convention), the last of the second version boxes were used up, followed by the third version box. Many feature changes occurred during the 1926 production, which covered about four years until the Model 30 was introduced. Somewhere in this time span, the Orange Box emerged.

**Orange Boxes:** The intro of the orange box included a trend to add more printed info about the enclosed reel's features on the box's front panel, while the box top graphics did not change. By tracking the printed information with Shakespeare catalogs and ads, collectors can get much



Marhoff Banner Boxes, Both Logos

better ideas about box dating than from patent or design dates alone. This added information also helps determine if a given reel is likely in an appropriate box. The orange boxes came in two logo versions.

The first version used the oval 'Fine Fishing Tackle' logo from the later gray boxes, but in a larger graphic as part of a black and white checkered ribbon draped diagonally on the upper left corner of the box top and one box end. Shakespeare was awarded a trademark for the checkered ribbon design in July of

Appendix F: Marhoff Reel Box Progression

1929. The early boxes in this version had an orange sticker on the box bottom with patent dates, similar to the white stickers on the gray boxes. Of the examples I have, the newest patent date was 1926. The later boxes in this first logo version printed the chronological listing of patents on the previously blank back panel. Of the examples I have, the newest patent date was 1928. The overall patent date progression on the first version orange box was 1926 and 1928.

The second version orange boxes kept the same box top and updated patent listings on the back panel. The front panel was changed, replacing the oval Fine Fishing Tackle logo with a new circle logo in white. Off-set in the white circle was an orange circle with a script "Marhoff" inside - clearly a reference to the classic Marhoff reel head plate cover with the off-set silver circle. Shakespeare was awarded a trademark for the new circle logo in April of 1931. The newest patent dates/design dates progression listed on the back panel included 1930, 1932, 1935, and 1939.

Toward the end of the orange box usage, the orange seemed to become redder and redder. Do note that the third orange box pictured above has gold ink where the other boxes had white. This box was a special edition for the gold plated Marhoff reels of that era.

**Red and Blue Boxes:** During the early production of the Model GE (circa 1946?), Shakespeare introduced a red and dark blue box. Length-wise, the tops were half red and half blue, with the traditional Fine Fishing Tackle oval logo on the blue top half. The box had one blue and one red side, and two red ends. The style number 1964 appeared on one end in a white-background rectangle below a block font 'MARHOFF'. The unique Marhoff logo was discontinued. The red side panels carried an ad for Wexford Wonder Line. At one point, the Model GE was also available in a plastic clam-shell box, shipped in a red and dark blue cardboard sleeve.



In the 1950's, Shakespeare eliminated the traditional Fine Fishing Tackle oval logo and replaced it with a simple full top white oval. The front panel underwent a similar change. All the red and dark blue boxes included back panel listings of patents.

**Historical Note** - Shakespeare introduced the anodized aluminum Marhoff reels circa 1941 (Model GK). World War II interrupted production of a new model until 1946 (Model GE). From that point on, all the Marhoff reels produced were marked Model GE. After the War, the reel market expanded in new directions, including the popularization of spinning reels, spin-cast reels, and free spool level winding baitcasters. The Marhoff's position in that changing market place was fading, and apparently deemed by the Shakespeare company to not be worthy of further development. The Model GE Marhoff reel quietly disappeared from the Shakespeare reel line in the early 1960's.

