

OCTOBER

Welcome to the workshop of **STANLEY POTTS**, violin maker (if he ever gets the chance), repairer, and connoisseur of malt whisky...

04 MONDAY

Work is piling up... Four Stentor cellos to fit up for St Mark's School, plus all the violins and about twelve bow repairs... and that repair job on the Klotz needs to be finished by next Monday.

That pest Peter K__ from the orchestra turned up this morning wanting another soundpost adjustment on his so-called Pressenda. He was here for over two hours! In the end I had to move the post a good inch below the bridge and get him to play it like that (sounded awful, of course), then I put it back to the original position. Seemed happy with that finally – charged him £100.

Once I get these jobs out of the way I really must get back to work on my own fiddle.

07 THURSDAY

Three more cellos came in this week! All need serious sorting out. Can hardly move in the workshop. I'd think about hiring an assistant but there's no room for one – anyway these days they are all 'graduates' from some fancy school and think they know everything already. Like that Newark chap who came here last month... can still see the look on his face when I showed him how I remove necks for resetting. It probably does look a bit dramatic, but it's the method I learnt from Arthur Pemberton and that's good enough for me.

Should get on with the Klotz... needs to be done by Monday.

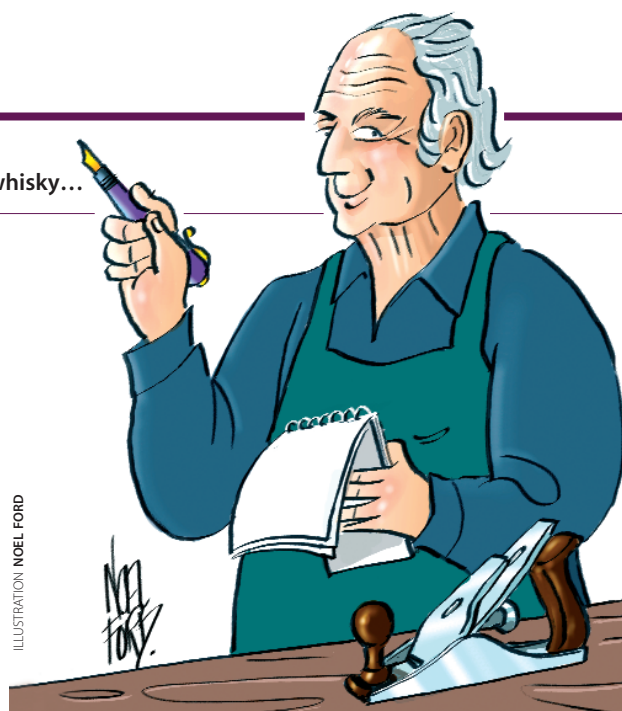
11 MONDAY

Up till 2am last night trying to get the Klotz finished. I was still fussing with the retouching when the owner came in to collect it... surface texture not exactly right but it will have to do. He asked me to invoice him (as expected!) so who knows when I will see the money.

Peter K__ back AGAIN! This time he wanted to know if the latest pernambuco tailpiece would improve the sound of his fiddle. (It always amazes me when people ask that sort of question – don't they realise this business is mostly trial and error?) I offered to order one in for him, but what he really needs to do is work on his bowing technique... he's trying to force the sound with finger pressure when he should be using arm weight. Everyone knows he only got the job in the orchestra because he was going out with the concertmaster (I bet she's regretting that move now she's taken up with the conductor).

19 TUESDAY

Mrs Hurley came in with her four daughters (and another addition seems to be imminent!). All the girls are moving up a size so I checked over their fiddles. For the eldest I found an old 3/4 that's been gathering dust in the corner. They all stood around the bench with solemn faces watching my every move – nice kids. She's keeping the 1/16 for baby. Only charged her £25 – no idea how she pays for all the lessons!



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Had a phone call from Herman Z__ about the violin that he left here a while ago. He says it was three and a half months but surely it can't be that long. Seemed rather annoyed when I said I hadn't been able to start work on it yet. A bit unreasonable really – I definitely remember that when he left it his last words to me were: 'No hurry – just whenever you can get to it.'

21 THURSDAY

My order from Milroys finally arrived – just in time too. Supplies in the bottom drawer were getting dangerously low. Wouldn't do to run out. I haven't tried many single malts from Campbeltown so the 15-year-old Springbank should be interesting.

Took the strings down on the Herman Z__ fiddle and had a quick look at the damage. At least now if he phones me again I can say I'm getting on with it.

Mrs Hurley dropped in a dozen eggs and a large bunch of beetroot.

22 FRIDAY

Had a bit of spare time this afternoon so I got my own fiddle out (took me some time to locate it – eventually found it in the cupboard under the stairs). Ribs are turning a nice golden-brown colour. Will definitely try to get some rough arching done next week.

Damn!! St Mark's just dropped off another three cellos and five violins – two with the necks out! What are those kids doing with them?

To find out more about Stanley Potts and his world, visit www.stanleypotts.co.uk