

# Underwood 5 typewriter

AUTHOR

TIME AND PLACE OF CREATION

Time:

1915 - 1920



TECHNICAL DATA

Dimensions:

height: 245 mm, width: 485 mm, length: 315 mm

OTHER

MIM 246/VII/44

KEYWORDS

analogowy, komunikacja, kopiowanie, Kraków, maszyna do pisania, nośnik, poczta, praca biurowa, przemysł, ulica, urzędzenia biurowe

DESCRIPTION

The Underwood 5 is a manual, type-bar typewriter with a Central European QWERTZ standard keyboard. It was manufactured between 1900 and the early 1930s by the Underwood Typewriter Company, with its registered office in New York in the United States. It was established in 1895 by John Thomas Underwood, who had previously been in the business of manufacturing carbon paper and tapes for Remington typewriters. His enterprise began operation in 1959 and was acquired by an office equipment manufacturer, the Italian company Olivetti. The Underwood Typewriter Company was successful thanks to its use of an innovative typewriter design developed by the German/American designer Franz Xaver Wagner (and patented by his son, Herman Lewis Wagner). Moreover, the company created a well thought-through marketing strategy. Both these factors allowed it to dominate the office equipment market. The Underwood 5 model is considered to be one of the first fully modern typewriters. The device conceived by Wagner set 20th century design standards. Although the typewriter concept appeared in 1714 in the writings of

British engineer Henry Mill, and the first patent for it was awarded to Christopher Latham Sholes, Carlos Glidden, and Samuel Willard Soulé in 1868, it was Wagner's device that combined the functions most desired by users. The typewriter used a four-row, stepped layout of keys to which a separate modifier key was added for typing capital letters (shift). The most important innovation, however, proved to be the horizontal placement of the type bars, which allowed the platen and the sheet of paper on it to be uncovered, thereby providing the typist with control over the text being typed. In earlier models of typewriters, the typed text could only be checked after the sheet of paper had been taken out of the machine. The Underwood 5 used a design based on a semi-enclosed, painted metal chassis, which allowed access to parts of the mechanism thanks to the open sides. The entire device has a cuboid shape. There is a short carriage with a platen and two sockets for ink tape above the front plate, which is covered with gilded inscriptions. The unit presented here bears the name of the Gerlach company, which deals in the production of and trade in steel products, as well as imports of Underwood machines to Poland. Also inscribed on the machine is information about the enterprise of S. Aksman in Kraków, which sold and repaired these devices. Author: Filip Wróblewski