The Story of Oberlin Smith

Local historian Arthur Cox has discovered information about the father of Bridgeton's Ferracute Machine Co. That proves the substantial contribution Oberlin Smith made to developing the technology we take for granted today. Cox is looking for an author to tell the story.

Oberlin Smith was not just an inventor who spent all his time hunched over a drawing board or tinkering. He was a blacksmith, die making, and rowing and golf and dancer up until his death of a heart attack, at age 86, in 1926. He also enjoyed swimming. As he lists his many achievements, it can be seen there is no one need or product that Oberlin Smith did not improve. He had invented one himself and built the record changer for an improvement 20 years earlier. He patented numerous other items, ranging from an egg to coffins, to artillery and remote control that served what remained of Ferracute Machine Co.

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He designed and built more than 500 types of presses, including machines to make Chinese coins. Those presses are known and it was his work at the Chinese National Mint, Chentu, China, with Ferracute coin presses.

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