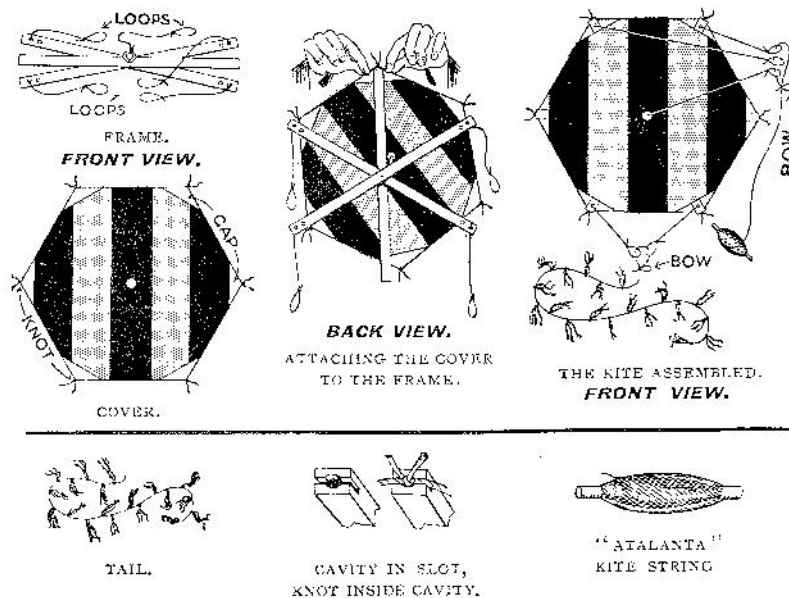


Flying the Atalanta

George Webster

The Atalanta Kite is mentioned in Ron Moulton's 'Kites' (1978 edition, p. 79). Marketed as "the kite that flies", it is described as being "a famously high quality toy". The 'classic' Atalanta was a folding hexagonal sold in 30" and 36" sizes. The measurement is the length of one of the three spars which rotate around a central pin to produce the frame. The cover and the tail are made from glassine paper (still available from internet suppliers), i.e. thin translucent paper with one shiny surface — it resembles the material used for stamp hinges in my youth. I'd never seen one until I inherited a collection of parts from the Kite Store (thanks again to Mark Cottrell) and a couple of years ago acquired a boxed set. The 1921 patent is quite often reproduced but extracts from the leaflet in the box are more illuminating. The three spars are held in place by the cord which edges the cover having a knot at the centre point of the outside edge of the frame — the end is not only slotted to take the cord but also has a cavity to locate the knot. Frames come supplied with five equal length lines. The centre and two adjacent are bridled together and the other two are the attachment for the tail.

To Assemble a Folding "Atalanta" Kite.

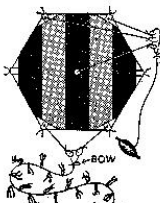
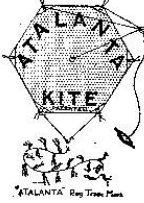



As can be seen in the illustration below a set of spars and accessories was on offer. Sadly all I have is several sets of spars and tails (these are much fluffier than in the illustration above) plus an adjustable buzzer for the 30" model price 3d — this runs along the leading edge not the middle as in the patent drawing. I have an invisible repair kit. I'd like to own a Winder, Best Quality String and most of all a Parachute and Release ('shows how an airman descends in an emergency') — no mention of bears.

RETAIL PRICES


SUITED TO ALL PURSES.


BWARE OF SUBSTITUTES. SEE our Registered Trade Mark "ATALANTA" on every Kite, Part and Accessory.

<p>Folding Kites in Coloured Box Complete with Buzzer, Patent Tail, Best Quality Flying String and Illustrated Instructions</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>18", 30", 36".</p> </div>	<p>Not-Folding Kites Complete with Patent Tail and Best Quality Flying String.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>B-11".</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>A-11".</p> </div> </div>
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KITES.		Price.	Postage U.K.
A-11"	KITE, complete	1/1½	6d.
B-11"	KITE, complete	1 4/4	6d.
18"	KITE, complete (in coloured Box)	2 6	3d.
30"	KITE, complete (in coloured Box)	5/0	9d.
36"	KITE, complete (in coloured Box)	7/6	9d.

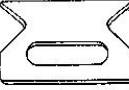
Parts and Accessories are all Standard.
Any Part can be bought Separately. When ordering please mention size.


Best Quality String on Winder.		Price	Postage U.K.
 <i>"Atalanta"</i> Kite String.	For A-11 in. or B-11 in. KITE	4½d.	2d.
	For 18 in. KITE	4½d.	2d.
	For 18 in. KITE, large size	9d.	2d.
	For 30 in. or 36 in. KITE	1/3	3d.


Graceful Patent Tails.		Price.	Postage U.K.
 <i>"Atalanta"</i> Tail.	For A-11 in. or B-11 in. KITE	3½d.	2d.
	For 18 in. KITE	4½d.	2d.
	For 30 in. KITE	1/0	3d.
	For 36 in. KITE	1/3	3d.

Attractive and Entertaining.		Price.	Postage U.K.
 Buzzer.	For 18 in. KITE	3d.	2d.
	For 30 in. KITE	3d.	2d.
	For 36 in. KITE	3d.	2d.

Made in many beautiful colours.		Price.	Postage U.K.
 Cover.	For 18 in. KITE	6d.	2d.
	For 30 in. KITE	1/-	2d.
	For 36 in. KITE	1/3	2d.
	REPAIRS for Kite Covers	1d.	2d.

Practical and Compact.		Price.	Postage U.K.
 Winder.	For A-11 in. or B-11 in. KITE	4½d.	2d.
	For 18 in. KITE	6d.	2d.
	For 30 in. or 36 in. KITE	9d.	2d.

Parachute		Price.	Postage U.K.
	Shows how an airman descends in an emergency. Each Parachute packed in an envelope.	1d.	2d.
For any Kite.			

Parachute Releaser.		Price.	Postage U.K.
	Complete with illustrated instruc- tions in coloured box.	6d.	2d.
For any Kite.			

*On Sale at all Best Toy Shops, Stores, Sports Dealers
and Stationers.*
ASK FOR AN "ATALANTA" KITE

So how do they fly? During several weeks this summer John Dobson and I have had appointments to meet and fly on the moors round here and on 20 September there was a light wind (<10 mph) and dry grass (paper covers!). The 36 " had been set up for a long time and the paper and the cover split if you just

looked at it. Repaired with sellotape, using a 15' length of tail and following the instructions it flew perfectly first time (see photo).



There was no noticeable dihedral on the spars. The 30" seemed to have a different proportion between frame and bridle but with a single adjustment to the central bridle and using the same tail again we had excellent flight — by which I mean a good angle and steady position.



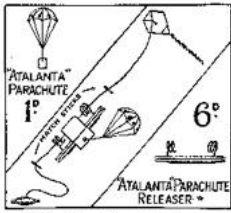
My mental comparison is between the 36" Atalanta and a Brookite — say a 3' cutter made of cotton with square wood spars. In a standard 12–16 mph wind I think the Cutter would just fly, but I'm sure the Atalanta would be in its element eating up string. However, in heavier winds the Brookite would score and of course Brookites also made strong wind kites such as boxes. But the Atalanta is ingenious, simple and so long as you don't smoke, fairly durable. The strong colours in a translucent material must have been a real contrast to cotton kites. Indeed, one interesting suggestion in the accompanying text to the patent is the passage dealing with the kite's purpose as a medical appliance whereby it would 'strengthen and cure eyes weakened by too constant use on near objects, a cure which would be greatly aided by the combination of colours on the translucent covering of the kite and the tail and the consequent transmission of different coloured rays of the spectrum'.

Sophocles Xenophon Pantcheff describes himself as a Greek-born Bulgarian living in Buckhurst Hill Essex when he applied for a Patent — but the return address for spares is in Redland, Bristol. The hexagon is well known to be the national kite type of Greece; or perhaps the Ottoman Empire (according to Ernest Barton).

Pantcheff certainly developed a great kite for its time particularly given the absence of plastic or nylon for covers, though perhaps the judgement of the Faraday House Journal that it was 'as great an improvement on the box kite as that was on the old fashioned tail kite' is excessive. But read below:

Inventor, Sole Manufacturer and Patentee Sophocles Xenophon Pantcheff D.F.H. The Leading and Largest Kite Manufacturer in the Empire.

They don't make them like that any more.



Releasing a Parachute at any Height from any Kite.

For your Holidays take a Folding "Atalanta."

For those an indoor life who lead,
For those who write, and think, and read,
Your "ATALANTA" in the sky
Will soothe your mind and charm your eye.

The Colours of the 18 in., 30 in. and 36 in. Kites can be changed by the user in one minute by detaching the Cover of the Kite and attaching another Cover of different colours. Pictures, Words, etc., painted or printed by the user on plain white or yellow covers (18 in., 30 in., 36 in.) can be changed in the same way in one minute.

MADE IN ENGLAND.

Patented in the U.K. and Foreign Countries.

British Patents :-

No. 158640. No. 198051.
No. 158502. No. 304599.
No. 158162. No. 304261.
Reg. Designs 734430, 178754,
780669.

Will interest Boys and Girls and all concerned with Aeronautics, Signalling, Wireless, Fishing, Shooting and Advertising.

"ATALANTA" in the Greek story was a maiden fleet of foot who travelled like the wind and left not a footprint behind her. To get rid of her suitors she ran a race with the swiftest runners of her time, who were given the alternative of either marrying her if they won the race or being put to death if they lost. "Atalanta" outstripped them all until Hippomenes the judge entered the lists, and he only won by distracting the maiden's attention by flinging golden apples about which he had been given by the goddess Venus.

We do not suppose that Mr. Pantcheff desires any rival kites in the trade to be destroyed if they lose a race with the "Atalanta," but we should imagine that if they were confronted with that alternative the rivals would be chary of entering their kites to compete with the "Atalanta."—From Games and Toys, Feb., 1931.

The Kite with Amazing Lifting Power.

OPINION OF SCIENTISTS.

The new "Atalanta" is a Kite which is as great an improvement on the box kite as that was on the old-fashioned tail kite.

From the Faraday House Journal, Vol. 10. No. 3.

SUPREMACY IN FLYING.

THE "ATALANTA" KITE

EXCELLENT SPORT FOR BOYS, GIRLS AND GROWN-UPS.

SEE OUR REG. TRADE MARK "ATALANTA" on every Kite and Accessory.

<p>FOLDING KITES, WITH BUZZER.</p> <p>18" 30" 36"</p>	<p>NOT-FOLDING KITES.</p> <p>B-II" A-II"</p>	<p>Parachute.</p> <p>Parachute Releaser.</p>	<p>"Atalanta" Kite String.</p> <p>Buzzer.</p>	<p>Winder.</p>
<p>GREAT BRITAIN PRODUCES THE BEST KITE IN THE WORLD.</p> <p>Amazing superiority in Flight and Performance over all other Kites. Flies with the Slightest Breeze to very High Altitudes, Loops the Loop, and Describes Wonderful Evolutions.</p> <p>The Colours of the 18", 30" and 36" Kites can be changed by the user in one minute. The Buzzer produces a pleasant humming sound at the will of the Flyer.</p>				
<p>Inventor, Sole Manufacturer and Patentee:</p> <p>S. X. PANTCHEFF, D.F.H., 152/154, Queen's Rd., Buckhurst Hill, Essex. The Leading and Largest Kite Manufacturer in the Empire. Telephone: BUCKhurst 2012.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> </div>				

THE KITE THAT FLIES.



Thanks to John Dobson for his editorial work and assembling the photographs and illustrations.