



Figure 129.—WHEELER AND WILSON No. 8 sewing machine of about 1876.
(Smithsonian photo 17663-C.)

Figures 128 and 129.—WHEELER AND WILSON sewing machines. The Wheeler and Wilson company was the largest manufacturer of sewing machines in the 1850s and the 1860s.

From late 1851 to 1856 it was the Wheeler, Wilson, Co., Watertown, New York; and from 1856 to 1905, it was Wheeler & Wilson Mfg. Co., Bridgeport, Connecticut.

The style of the head changed very little during these years (see figs. 26 and 27). Both a table style with iron legs and a cabinet model were made: the head was usually mounted to stitch from left to right. In 1861, the company introduced the famous glass presser foot, patented on March 5 of that year by J. L. Hyde. The presser foot was made of metal but shaped like an open U into which was slid a small glass plate, with a hole for the needle descent. The glass allowed the seamstress to observe the stitching and to produce very close-edge stitching. It remained a favorite of many women for years. In 1876, the new No. 8 machine was introduced and a new series of serial numbers was initiated. It is, therefore,

imperative to know that the machine is one of the earlier style machines before using the following list of serial numbers to date the machines, approximately as follows:

<i>Serial Number</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Serial Number</i>	<i>Year</i>
1—200	1851	141100—181161	1864
201—650	1852	181161—220318	1865
651—1449	1853	220319—270450	1866
1450—2205	1854	270451—308505	1867
2206—3376	1855	308506—357856	1868
3377—5586	1856	357857—436722	1869
5587—10177	1857	436723—519930	1870
10178—18155	1858	519931—648456	1871
18156—39461	1859	648457—822545	1872
39462—64563	1860	822546—941735	1873
64564—83119	1861	941736—1034563	1874
83120—111321	1862	1034564—1318303	1875
111322—141099	1863	1138304—1247300	1876

Records of the second series of serial numbers dating from 1876 are not available.