

# Just For Openers January-December 2025 1

## Schultz Master Key Opener

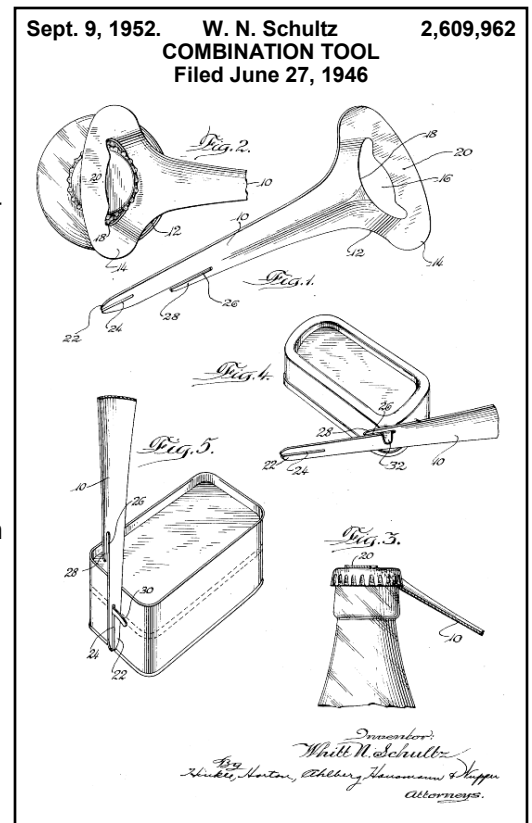
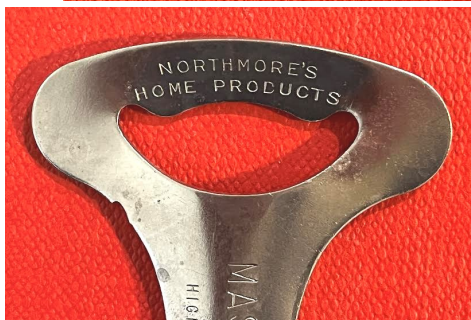
For "Efficient Housewives" By Don Thornton

Whitt Northmore Schultz was described in his obituary in the *Chicago Tribune* as "an author, consultant and teacher in business, advertising and public speaking." The newspaper reported that "in the 1960s and 1970s, Mr. Schultz contributed frequent articles to the *Tribune* on self-help, creative thinking, money management and human relations. He also wrote five books and numerous magazine articles on those subjects."

Schultz, a resident of Highland Park and later Wilmette, Illinois, died of cancer in 1984 at the age of 63. The obit also said Schultz, a Northwestern University graduate and U.S. Army veteran, "began a successful mail order business in the late 1940s" at the age of 22 operating from the basement and garage of his mother's suburban Chicago home.

What the obit did not say was that his Northmore's Home Products, launched with a \$1,200 investment, grew in four quick years to a \$125,000 gross with more than 100,000 customers. It also didn't say that Schultz was an inventor and that his patented kitchen device was the backbone of the mail order business. Schultz applied for a patent for his "combination tool" June 27, 1946 and it was granted September 9, 1952, No. 2,608,962.

Schultz said his invention provides "a novel tool which is efficient for removing crown-type caps from bottles, for opening sardine-type tins and also containers of the type known in the trade as vacuum cans or tabbed vacuum cans. The 6-inch device is marked: **MASTER KEY PAT. PEND. HIGHLAND PK., ILL.** on the handle and **NORTHMORE'S HOME PRODUCTS** on the top. An advertisement in the *New York Daily News* on April 23, 1947 listed the price at 50 cents postpaid.



**Efficient Housewives**

Use this MASTER KEY kitchen aid . . . No more bent spoons or knicked knives...Thousands now in use . . . SATISFACTION GUARANTEED . . . ORDER ONE, OR TWO, TODAY . . . 50 cents postpaid.

**NORTHMORE'S HOME PRODUCTS  
BOX 756-N, HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS**