

# Just For Openers January-December 2026 1

## Fred S. Fletcher's 1919 Combo Opener

By Don Thornton

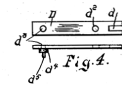
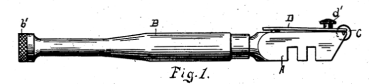
Fred S. Fletcher of Forestville, Connecticut, began his long and successful manufacturing career with a glass cutter, but he also found time for another cutter – an innovative punch and cut can opener combo. Fletcher teamed up with his father-in-law, Franklin Terry, at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century to launch the Fletcher-Terry Company in Forestville to make glass cutters based on Fletcher's 1903 patent.

Fletcher and his brothers Tom and Gayle, started production work in a barn on the Terry property. The cutter proved very successful and the company moved into its own factory and began to offer other products. One of those was Fletcher's combination can and bottle opener. He was awarded Design Patent No. 54,250 on December 9, 1919 for what he called a "combination implement." It was one of the first, if not the first, designs for a metal one-piece can opener punch blade and hook bottle opener.

For decades Fletcher-Terry was a family operation and continues today as Fletcher Business Group in East Berlin, Connecticut, making products for the picture framing and glass processing industries. Fred Fletcher ran the company most of his life. He died in 1963 at the age of 90. Five years after his death, his grandson, ironically named Terry Fletcher, took over as president and in 1992 as Chairman. He died in 2021 at the age of 87.



Oct. 27, 1903. F. S. Fletcher 742,179  
GLASS CUTTER  
Filed Dec. 11, 1902



WITNESSES:  
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ATTORNEY.

Dec. 9, 1919. F. S. Fletcher Design 54,250  
COMBINATION IMPLEMENT  
Filed Aug. 14, 1919

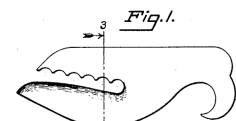


Fig. 2.



Fig. 4.



Inventor  
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