

Today I'm going to talk about Stephan Farffler, although I would like to make a short introduction.

The lives of many people would be very complicated if the wheelchair hadn't appeared. The history tells us that the first wheelchair concept was found in stone inscriptions from China and has been used at least since the sixth century AD. Nevertheless, one of the best-documented early examples was made by an unknown inventor for King Philip of Spain in 1595. This chair was elaborate and had arm and leg rests, as well as four small wheels. Nevertheless, it needed to be pushed around by a servant.

Stephan Farffler was born on 12th November 1633 in Altdorf bei. Farffler suffered an accident when he was three years old and was paralyzed afterwards or amputee (it is not clear). He was able to use a wheelchair from a hospital and a horseless carriage as models. Both were built by another inventor called Hans Haustch who was also from Nuremberg. As said before and according to the news from the time, he was able to build himself two vehicles with manual traction. In 1655, he built his prototype of wheelchair, which consisted in a vehicle with three wheels that he drove with hand cranks thanks to a gear mechanism. This was possible thanks to his mechanical knowledge as a clockmaker. A short time later, he built a vehicle with four wheels and a similar driving. After his death on 24th October 1689, his wheelchair was exposed on the Municipal library of Nuremberg and some wooden models were built for the upper class.

Farffler also developed another invention which was a device for turning an hourglass at regular intervals. Related to his job as clockmaker, he added chimes to the clocktower of his hometown.

A hundred years later it would appear the bicycle, so we could see the wheelchair as a precursor.

Bibliography:

- Dbpedia: https://dbpedia.org/page/Stephan_Farffler
- Science Museum:
<https://blog.sciencemuseum.org.uk/history-of-the-wheelchair/#:~:text=The%20first%20self%2Dpropelled%20wheelchair,his%20back%20as%20a%20child.>

The presentation is deployed on: <https://alejeglez.github.io/wheelchairAlejeglez.github.io/>