

# The TOOL SHED

NUMBER 42



JUNE 1986

A Journal of Tool Collecting published by CRAFTS of New Jersey

## TOOL REPRODUCTIONS

by Jack Whelan

CRAFTS—We are collectors of rare and familiar tools. If one chooses to define familiar tools as those that are made currently and can be bought from the tools suppliers, it seems that the distinction between rare and familiar is shrinking.

Wooden planes, with cutters held by wood wedges, are still made in Europe and are offered in great variety in a number of catalogs. Block, smooth, jack, jointer, scrub, rebate, stop rabbet, chisel, tothing, match, filletster, rounds, dovetail (and dovetail saw), D-router, and others are listed. We have all seen reproductions of Stanley planes made by Record and Footprint in England and by Kunz in West Germany. You can buy a Stanley iron made the old way—laminated hard and soft steel—as they're being made in Japan and are available from American supply houses.

Thumbing through the Fine Tool catalog, I note planes as above plus teak and brass torpedo levels, cornering tools, and brass-cased plumb bobs. Garrett Wade lists Cheney hammers, their own line of Stanley types with tight machining specifications, and bronze reproductions of the Stanley 95 and 140. Woodcraft offers rosewood spokeshaves, scratch awls, wooden vise screws, a shoulder knife, and even a reproduction of a Barnes velocipede scroll saw.

Need a veneer hammer? Pit saw? Mortise axe? Picaroon? Froe? Slick? Bark spud? You'll find them all in the Frog Tool catalog. And all of the above carry such things as bow saws, rosewood marking and mortise gauges and squares. Conover, who has made screw boxes and taps for some time and who recently introduced a wood bed lathe, offers reproductions of some of Michael Dunbar's favorite old tools and will sell you a

plated Sheffield brace (with a modern chuck) and spoon or auger bits.

It may not be fair to call all of these reproductions, as some have been made continuously—but they are certainly more available than they used to be. It has always been possible to get some rare tools made to order—as the Henley Optical Company (now Henley Plane) would make their version of the Norris plane for you, or a craftsman blacksmith would make a froe. There is a gray line dividing such special-order user's tools and tools made as reproductions of collector's items.

[Continued on page 5]

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## HERB KEAN TO SPEAK ON HISTORY AND PRESERVATION OF CAROUSEL ANIMALS AT JUNE 1 MEETING

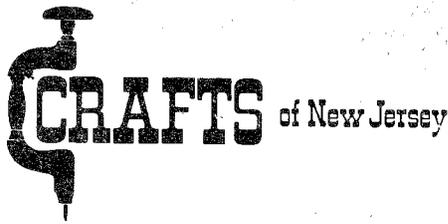
CRAFTS of New Jersey will hold its final meeting of the 1985-1986 year on Sunday, June 1, at the Clinton Historical Museum Village in Clinton.

Tailgate sales (and tall stories) begin in the parking lot at 1:00 p.m. The business meeting and formal program begin at 2:00. As this will be the official annual meeting of the Society, it will include the election of officers and directors for the coming year.

The afternoon's program will be an especially interesting one. The speaker will be Herb Kean, who will give a lecture-demonstration on "The History and Preservation of Carousel Animals." Herb will bring along some of his wooden menagerie to display.

There will also be a "Whatsit?" session, conducted by Harry O'Neill. Refreshments will be served.

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**Collectors of Rare and Familiar Tools Society  
of New Jersey**

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Membership in CRAFTS is open to anyone interested in early trades and industries, and the identification, study and preservation of tools and implements used and made in New Jersey. Annual dues are seven dollars for the membership year of July 1 to June 30. Membership fees may be sent to the Treasurer: John M. Whelan, 38 Colony Court, Murray Hill, NJ 07974.

**The Tool Shed**

Published five times per year for members of CRAFTS of New Jersey. Editor: Robert Fridlington, 8 Keith Jeffries Ave., Cranford, NJ 07016. Contributions, especially about New Jersey tools and trades, are welcomed.

**WALLACE NAMED**

**I. A. TEACHER OF THE YEAR**

CRAFTSman Mark Wallace, a teacher in Vernon Township for the past six years, has been honored as the 1986 New Jersey Industrial Arts Teacher of the Year by the state Technology Education Association. Mark is the son of Don and Caryl Wallace of Collingswood. Don is also a member of CRAFTS.

Mark received the Teacher of the Year award in recognition of his contributions to the development of technology education in the Vernon schools, among which was the introduction of a computer-aided drafting program for 7th and 8th grade students.

He also keeps busy outside the classroom. When the threat of radon gas was first made public in 1985, Mark led his school district to the first positive detection of the gas in Sussex County Schools.

A graduate of Winona State University in Minnesota, Wallace serves on the state Commission on Technology Education, which was created and is funded by the N.J. State Department of Education.

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**SALAMAN'S "DICTIONARY  
OF LEATHER-WORKING TOOLS":  
A REVIEW**

by Raymond R. Townsend

R. A. Salaman. **DICTIONARY OF LEATHER-WORKING TOOLS AND TOOLS OF ALLIED TRADES, c. 1700-1950.** New York: Macmillan, 1986. Pp. 377. Illustrations and index. Price: \$50.00 (cloth).

R. A. Salaman's Dictionary of Woodworking Tools has become the bible for all collectors of woodworking tools. There is no doubt in my mind that his Dictionary of Leather-Working Tools will become the same as it is presented in the same clear and concise manner.

Mr. Salaman has been interested in and has collected tools of the various crafts for many years. I have had the pleasure of viewing his collection of craftsman's tools in the St. Albans Museum, England, which is a most outstanding display of many varieties, well labeled. His various shops, set up with mannequins as if at work with the tools of their craft, are outstanding in bringing to life a bygone craft.

The amount of research Mr. Salaman has expounded in his two dictionaries is astounding and reveals a knowledge and capability of ferreting out information so much needed by tool collectors. His guide is presented in a way that is brief, precise, and authoritative. The illustrations (more than 1,100) are truly superb.

One could go on and on as to the merits of this work; it is a book that must be in the library of every tool collector.

It has over 1,000 different leather-working tools described and illustrated, grouped under the crafts in which they are ordinarily employed. There is a general index for locating a particular tool, regardless of the craft by which it was used.

The crafts include: bookbinder; boot and shoe maker; clog maker; decoration of leather; glove maker; harness and saddle maker; tanner's and currier's tools; and others. Among the

[Continued on page 8]

SPEAKER PROFILE  
— HERB KEAN —

Herb Kean, who will speak on "The History and Preservation of Carousel Animals" at the June 1 meeting of CRAFTS, is known to virtually all of our members as a full-time collector, part-time auctioneer, one-time dealer, and all-time nice guy. A founding member of CRAFTS, he has served as a Director since its beginning; he has just carried us through our eighth and most successful auction; and he has been a regular contributor to "The Tool Shed" and to other tool publications.

A native of New Jersey, Herb grew up in Irvington. After graduating from Penn State and working for his Uncle Sam (U.S. Army Ski Troops), he began a career in forestry on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. Before long, however, he returned to New Jersey and began a new career in business.

He eventually headed his own electronics company, manufacturing electrical-mechanical components for aircraft, missiles, and the space program. Through his work with space program, he became acquainted with several of the Astronauts.

Over the years, Herb has kept busy with a wide variety of outside activities. His avid interest in sports led him to found the Colonial Hockey League in northern New Jersey some years ago, and he takes great pride in the League's success in international competition.

He discovered the lure of antique tools in the mid-1970's, with the purchase of a marking gauge. However humble the beginning ("I thought it was spectacular," Herb says), he approached collecting with typical enthusiasm. Within a year, he had not only assembled an impressive collection, but he had begun selling tools. Anyone who attended his Saturday Sales in Chatham (from 1976 to 1981) remembers the good fellowship, good tools, and good prices.

Patiently tolerating all of this (at least most of the time) is Herb's lovely wife Doris. After Herb's article on discovering the tool cache in the Catskills in the April issue of "The Tool Shed," Doris was nominated as "Woman of the Year" by several other CRAFTS wives. The Kean's have two children: a daughter, Barbara, who is

married and lives in Massachusetts; and a son Steve, who lives in Maine. Steve, also a member of CRAFTS, is a tool dealer of some note himself.

Herb became interested in carousel animals after Steve bought four of the beasts at an auction. But you will undoubtedly hear more of this story on June 1.

Now enjoying an early "retirement," Herb keeps busier than ever. He was the auctioneer at both the CRAFTS and PATINA sales this spring, and he continues to wield the hammer at many charity auctions.

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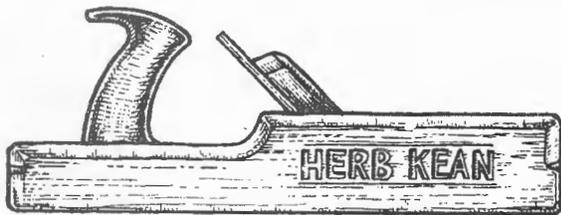
OUR FRATERNAL  
FINE FEATHERED FRIENDS

by Al Housman

[Editor's Note: CRAFTSman Al Housman combines tool collecting with bird watching. Housman, who has an impeccable reputation for honesty, reports that he has recently spotted the following varieties of our "fine feathered friends." He has added a brief description.]

- The Amity Robin: delightful member, a smile for everyone.
- Brass Throated Warbler: auctioneers against competitive chatter.
- Taxilated Grouse: collects sales tax.
- Inky-Headed Editor Bird: repeatedly cries, "Material, material!"
- Green Flushed Peavy: good buyer at the tailgate sales.
- Baldheaded Quibble: buys, but first bargains.
- Ruffled Dabbler: lamenting crier (over everyone's prices).
- Browsing Twibil: never buys, but enjoys looking.
- Headnodding Scorp: must always bid secretly.
- Portly Mugwump: mug over the table, wump blocking the aisle.
- Oreoeyed Manana Bird: promised the editor an article years ago.
- Stoney Eyed Froe: dozes at meetings; too much fermented nectar the night before.
- Redeyed Whoopee: related to the froe; both of the Night Owl family.
- Crafty Puffin: lavish with discounts, on overpriced tools.

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# Kean Kuttin's

## AN OVERVIEW OF THE '86 CRAFTS AUCTION

Things seldom go right, at least not completely. The 1986 CRAFTS Auction was a shocker. Almost everything went right!

This is not to say that the auction didn't have its potential for disaster. It had that written all over it. The two big national tool auctions, just prior to ours, were "soft." Three of the biggest "sparklers" that were promised to us were withdrawn. One or two of our mainstay dealers didn't look like they were going to make it. The overloading of lots, due to the Lipsey collection, appeared too much for our auctioneer. And last year's kitchen crew from the firehouse backed out. We were holding our heads!

PATINA had just put on a highly successful auction, and there was every indication that they might top us for the first time. But pride stepped in and won the day. Friendly rivalry works beautifully.

Steve Zluky, Joe Hauck, and Harry O'Neill did an impossible job. They



Norris Panel Plane in beautiful condition sold for \$450.

combined the Lipsey collection so its volume would not preclude submittals from other members. There was plenty of critical second-guessing about this; but I saw those lots sold, and they brought decent money in almost all cases. My congratulations to these three CRAFTSMen.

Virginia O'Neill stepped up and ran the kitchen in her frugal Yankee manner, and we did better than ever before. And no one went hungry—except the auctioneer.



A. Howland & Co. Plow Plane, marked R.R. WINTERMUTE/ S. CO./ N.J./ 1872, sold for \$325.

At the last minute some great sparklers came in and "made our day." All the runners showed up, and there was no confusion or delay.

Our tally keepers—Chuck Granick and Bob Fridlington—were near flawless, and our clerks—Jack and Helen Whelan and Markay Zluky—were flawless.

But the thing that warmed the cockles of everyone's heart was the crowd—large (192, with 144 bidders), spirited, and heavy with dealers and eager collectors. And I am pleased to announce that we broke a few auction price records for individual pieces. We also broke the auctioneer's personal speed record. But the biggest record we broke was our total sales dollars (slightly over \$30,000).

Not bad for a club auction, huh?

[Editor's note: Thanks and congratulations to our record-setting, world-class auctioneer, Herb Kean!]

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[Tool Repro's, continued from page 1]

The greater availability of old types of tools—woodworking tools in particular—is undoubtedly due to the resurgence of interest in hand crafts. Many individual craftsmen reproducing antiques turn to using old tools. The reasons for this may have been well put by Dunbar (1) and don't need rehashing here—but many turn to reproducing the tools they need. At Williamsburg and other restorations where the use of old tools is practiced, many of the craftsmen make their own tools or seek reproductions made by others.

There can be as much satisfaction in making a tool as in making any other object. Many craftsmen, having made tools for their own use, enjoy making others for sale. Profiles of five such have been drawn in a series by Vern Ward in his "Fine Tool Journal." Gretchen Chipperini, for example, has set up to furnish small commercial quantities of such tools as wooden panel raisers and scraper planes in the New England Tool Works. Her beautiful tools are shown in the current Garrett Wade catalog. A modern version of the Holtzapfel lathe will be produced by Lawler Gear Company, as described in the current "Fine Woodworking."

Making a wooden plane is, I think, a worthwhile endeavor for any woodworker. I got a much greater appreciation for the skills of the old planemakers who turned out five a day of a much better product than I could make in days. There is no lack of information should you care to try your hand. James Krenov tells how he does it in one of his books (2). Ken Roberts describes a more classical approach (3), including Ted Ingraham's description of how he reproduces 18th century molding planes. Norman Vandal tells how he does it in a magazine article (4), and there is a useful paperback on the subject (5).

You can even buy a videotape showing how, according to a recent advertisement. You won't even need an old cutter—tapered plane irons are offered commercially. And you can have your own name stamp, complete with zig-zag border, made in England. Making a panel plane of the Norris or Spiers type, using dove-tailed brass or steel plates, represents a challenge that has been accepted by a few craftsmen—there is an account of

one effort in the current "Fine Woodworking."

If planes don't appeal to you, you can read about making a bowsaw (6) or about forging your own carving chisels (7). Whatever you care to attempt, you can probably find some information about it in print.

The love of fine tools can lead to making objects which, while completely functional tools, are just too beautiful to use. Anyone who has seen Dominic Micalizzi's creations knows what I'm talking about. There were others at a show entitled "Tools for the Woodworker" in Connecticut in 1983, which you can see in photographs (8).

The point I am trying to make is that, in spite of all the furor in print about the ethics or morals of reproducing tools, reproduction or emulation is and will continue to be a fact of life.

Those who collect tools, not history, will think this is fine. Those who are only interested in authentically old tools should be aware of these current trends and learn to recognize the modern creations. While most of the items discussed here cost more than the equivalent old tool, this will not continue to be the case, particularly when they start to appear in second-hand markets.

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#### Notes

- (1) Michael Dunbar, *Antique Woodworking Tools* (NY: Hastings House, 1977).
- (2) James Krenov, *The Fine Art of Cabinet Making* (NY: Van Nostrand, 1977).
- (3) Ken Roberts, *Wooden Planes in 19th Century America*, Vol. 2 (Manchester, NH: Ken Roberts Pub. Co., 1983).
- (4) *Fine Woodworking*, Vol. 37 (Nov./Dec., 1982), p. 72.
- (5) Perch and Lee, *How to Make Wooden Planes* (Ottawa: Lee Valley Tools, 1981).
- (6) *Fine Woodworking*, Vol. 55 (Nov./Dec., 1985), p. 121.
- (7) Alexander Weygers, *The Making of Tools* (NY: Van Nostrand, 1978).
- (8) *Fine Woodworking*, Vol. 45 (Mar./April, 1984), p. 76.

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SOME NOTES ON JOSEPH H. RUSBY

by Al Housman



RUSBY'S EXTENSION DRILL BRACE  
FOR WOOD OR METAL

J. H. RUSBY

NUTLEY, N. J.  
NEWARK, N. J.



RUSBY'S CHAIN FEED

Some months ago, I thought I had a lead on an article on the Rusby Extension Drill through a niece of the inventor, Joseph H. Rusby. She was one of nine nieces and nephews who shared Rusby's estate, as he was a lifelong bachelor.

Unfortunately, these relatives had little information about Rusby, so the article I envisioned never materialized; but I thought some members interested in New Jersey tools might appreciate seeing the information I did pick up.

Joseph H. Rusby was a resident of Nutley, N.J. He lived in a carriage barn that had been converted into living quarters and a workshop. Here he made parts for the drill he invented. The housings of his drills bear the mark NEWARK, N.J., but his niece believes that Newark's name was used only because he had the castings made by a firm in that city.

Rusby spent his winters in Florida, traveling slowly there and back, selling his drills along the way. I looked at many cards and letters he had written, but none of them said much about the drill business. One letter from Atlanta, Georgia, mentions that it was a disappointing town for sales.

All of the cards and envelopes he used carried a picture of the Rusby drill. But his letterhead (1915), shown above, also featured Rusby's Chain Feed. Apparently, as the drill shaft turned,

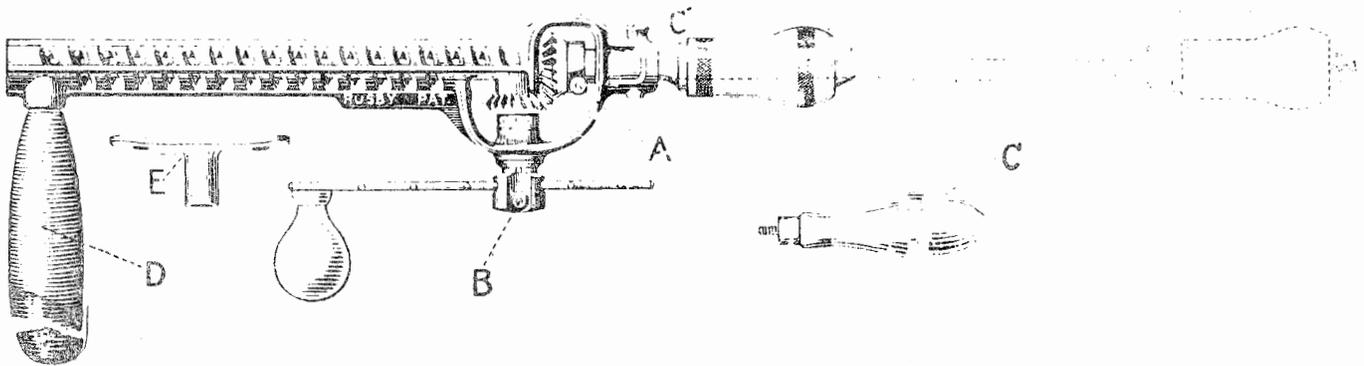
the chain holder screwed up the shaft so as to tighten the chain and draw the drill forward.

I got some photos of a "mint" encased drill that is owned by the niece, and I was allowed to borrow another drill with a long shaft. One feature that I learned about was the spring-held J-pin that holds the shaft gear. The pin fits into a shallow hole in the shaft and is so positioned as to allow the proper meeting of the shaft and drive gears. This arrangement makes shaft assembly or exchange easy.

On page 8 is a picture of "Albie's Joint," wherever that might have been. It was not Rusby's workshop, but it was perhaps a shop where some components were made, as the workman in the foreground is displaying a Rusby drill.

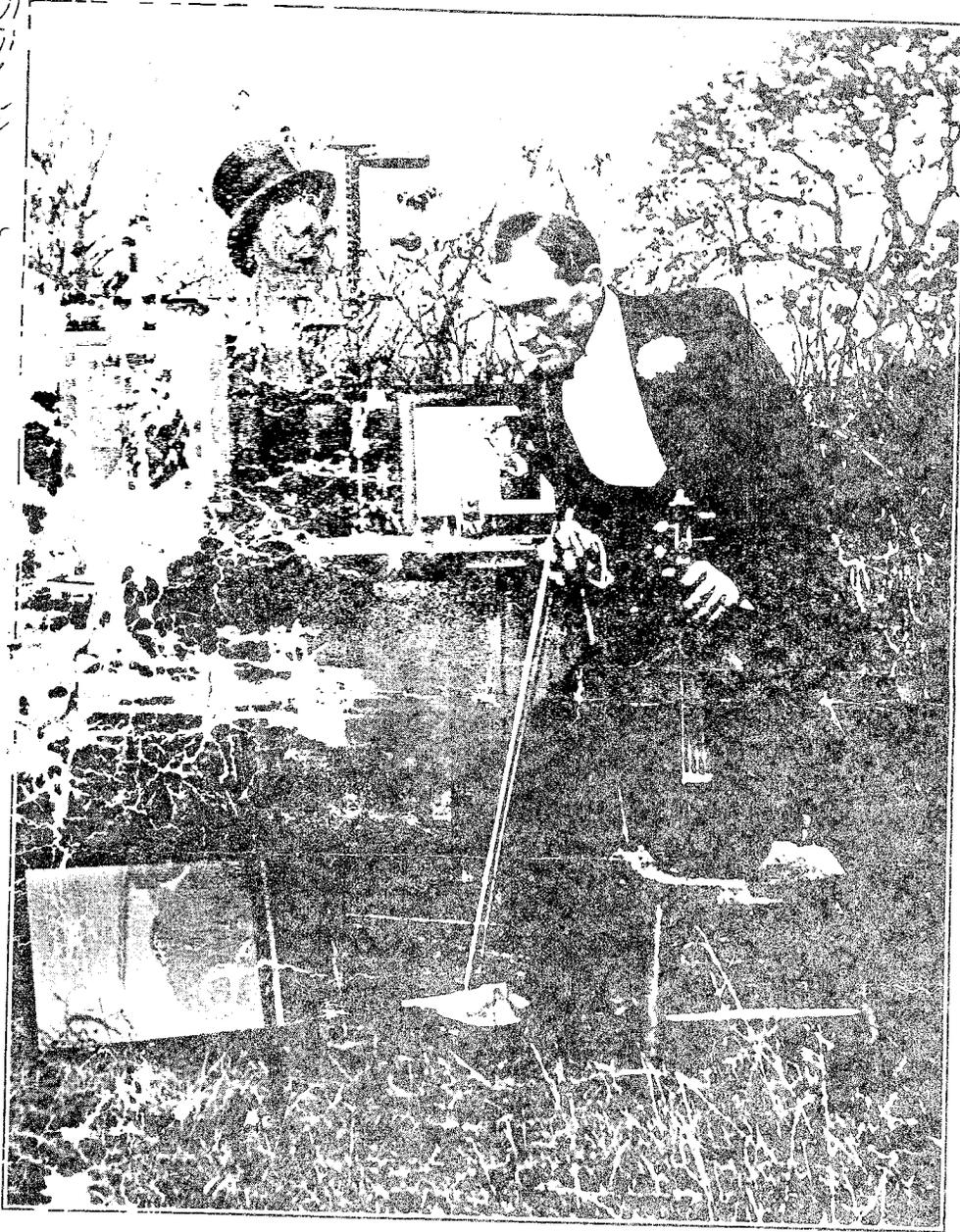
Joseph Rusby's talents were not limited to tools. He was also a composer of sentimental songs. On the sheet music for one of these songs, there is a rather unusual picture (opposite page). As you can see, there are odds and ends of objects, Mr. Rusby himself with his violin—and a Rusby drill. On the last page of the song sheet, exclusively and only, is a drawing of Mr. Rusby's drill (shown below). As the paper was damaged, it is difficult to see the extended version of the drill in this drawing.

Joseph Rusby was killed in the late 1920's while riding a bicycle to a local bakery—at the age of 83.



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# SOMEBODY



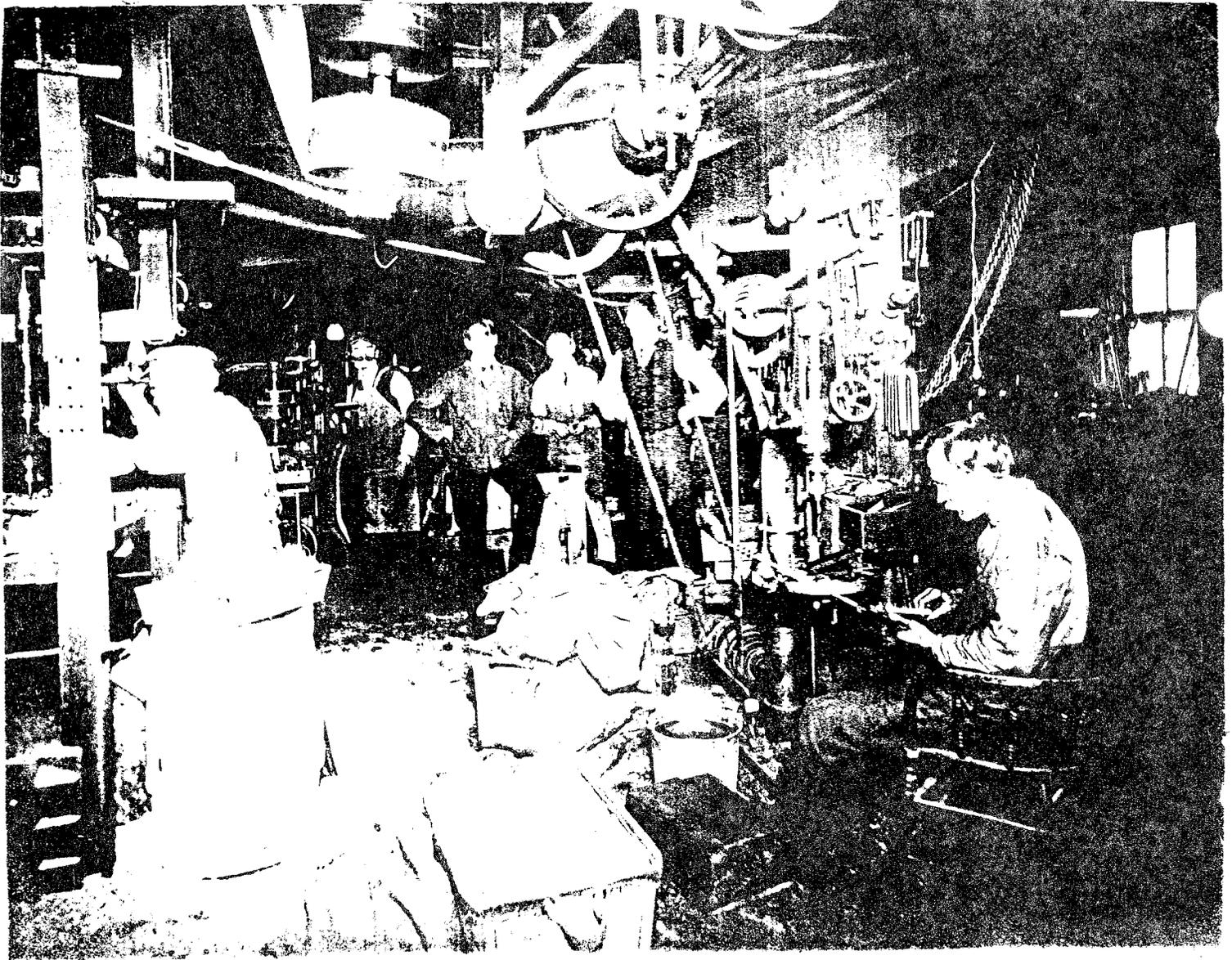
## SONGS TO DEARIE

BY JOSEPH H. RUSBY

Published by  
J. H. RUSBY  
NUTLEY, N. J.

PRICE 40 CENTS

Albee's work



Expanding The Staff (Some)

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[Salaman, continued from page 3] miscellaneous trades are the ball maker; coach trimmer; whip maker; taxidermist; and other heretofore seldom written-on crafts.

With his two dictionaries, Mr. Salaman has certainly earned the title of one of the leading tool authorities in the English-speaking world and, I might add, he could well be called the Dennis Diderot of the 20th century.

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Pop Rivet, who is getting old and crotchety, wouldn't submit his copy for this month's issue. He says he is holding out for a higher salary. We are currently negotiating with him and will try to coax him back for September.