

The TOOL SHED

NUMBER 69



NOVEMBER 1991

A Journal of Tool Collecting published by CRAFTS of New Jersey

NEW BOOK BY THE POLLAKS REVIEWED

by Robert Fridlington

SELECTIONS FROM THE CHRONICLE: THE FASCINATING WORLD OF EARLY TOOLS AND TRADES. Edited by Emil and Martyl Pollak. Mendham, NJ: The Astragal Press, 1991. Pp. vi, 407. Illustrations and index. 6 1/8" x 9 1/4". Hardcover with dust jacket. Price: \$24.95.

Since its first issue in 1933, THE CHRONICLE of the Early American Industries Association has informed and entertained its readers with articles devoted to the tools, crafts, and technology of bygone days. Indeed, for many years THE CHRONICLE and Henry C. Mercer's ANCIENT CARPENTER'S TOOLS, first published in 1929, were virtually the only sources for such topics. More recently, the number of publications dealing with these and related subjects has increased enormously, but the venerable CHRONICLE is still the standard against which newcomers are measured.

In SELECTIONS FROM THE CHRONICLE Emil and Martyl Pollak, whose works on American wooden planes and their makers are standard references, have brought together fifty-five of those articles, originally published between 1934 and 1989, and fashioned them into an absorbing anthology. This is an excellent book. It is also a thoroughly enjoyable one. Its appearance should be welcomed by everyone interested in early tools and occupations, and particularly by the readers of THE TOOL SHED.

SELECTIONS contains a brief Preface by Elliot Sayward, the current Editor of THE CHRONICLE, and an even briefer Introduction by Charles Hummel, a Director of EAlA, which give the work a sort of seal of approval. But the next 400-plus pages belong to the reprinted articles, and they comprise a grand and glorious miscellany. In length they run from one to 23 pages. Some are fully documented scholarly efforts; some are "original sources," such as a

journal or account book; some are personal reminiscences. What they have in common is that they are all consistently interesting and rewarding.

The subjects are nothing if not wide-ranging. The articles contain information on tools used by carpenters, wheelwrights, cord-wainers, chairmakers, ice harvesters, tin-smiths, and many others—including burglars! Among the authors are many familiar names. There is R. A. Salaman on "Workshop Folklore in England"; W. L. Goodman on "Tools and Equipment of the Early Settlers"; Paul Keabian on "The English Carpenter's Rule and Ship Carpenter's Rule" and R. James Aber (the man who christened CRAFTS) on "The Country's Largest Tool Store."

Hungry for more? Then take a look at the articles on the shot tower (by G. A. R. Goyle!), blacksmith hammer signals, horse whips, horse-hair sieves, burning brands, clogmaking, book-binding, oldtime fences, hewing timber, the spinning wheel, or eighteenth-century American planemakers. For a change of pace you can read about Ohio coffins and their makers or about the wooden leg of Founding Father Gouverneur Morris. If you want a chuckle, see "Truth in Advertising 1770-1776." For a belly laugh, check out Winslow Homer's wacky print of the lumberman on snowshoes, which could be captioned "How many things can you find wrong in this woodcut?"

This is a book to be tasted, sampled, savored. Because of this, it can be recommended to people who already own back issues of THE CHRONICLE, either originals or the reprint editions. Remember, these are "selections," and the texts do depart from the originals in appearance, if not in content. Page, size, format, and typeface are different, and not all of the original photographs and illustrations have been re- (Continued on page 7)



Collectors of Rare and Familiar Tools Society
of New Jersey

President _____ JOHN M. WHELAN, Murray Hill
Vice President _____ JOSEPH G. HAUCK, Lebanon
Secretary _____ BARBARA FARNHAM, Stockton
Treasurer _____ HELEN WHELAN, Murray Hill

The purpose of CRAFTS of New Jersey is to encourage interest in early trades and industries, and in the identification, study, preservation and exhibition of tools and implements used and made in New Jersey as an integral part of our heritage.

Membership in CRAFTS is open to anyone who shares the above interests. Annual dues per person or couple are ten dollars for the membership year of July 1 thru June 30. Membership fees may be sent to the Treasurer: Helen Whelan, 38 Colony Court, Murray Hill, N.J. 07974.

THE TOOL SHED

Published five times a year for members of CRAFTS of New Jersey. Coeditors: Frank W. and Mary Alice Kingsbury, R.D. 1, Box 316, Glen Gardner, N.J. 08826. Editor elect: Stuart Shippey, 251 Hillside Ave., Chatham, N.J. 07928. Articles, especially about New Jersey tools and trades, are encouraged and may be sent to the editors.

THE WOODEN PLANE JACK WHELAN, SPEAKER

The November meeting of CRAFTS of New Jersey will be held at the HOST Masonic Lodge in High Bridge, N.J. on the 10th of November at 2:00 P.M. Of course, long before that time (officially beginning at 1:00 P.M.) you will find most of those who are coming, busily swapping and selling tools in the parking lot.

"The Early History and Development of the Wooden Plane" is the topic of our president, Jack Whelan, as he gives his first talk for the CRAFTS of New Jersey.

Before the meeting and during the break there will again be exhibits by individual members. Don't miss them, or the "What's It" session with Don Wallace afterwards. Be sure to bring that tool for identification.

SPEAKER'S PROFILE JOHN M. WHELAN

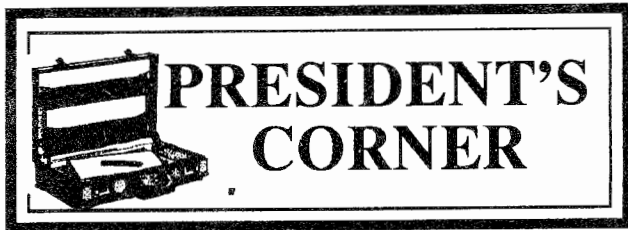
Our speaker and president began his tool collecting in much the same way many others have: as a user and home improvement jack-of-all-trades. He began adding built-in drawers for storage after moving to his present home in 1955. With flea markets as a source, one of Jack's early interests was in collecting English "Butcher" chisels and gauges. However he now specializes in wooden planes which he has been collecting for approximately ten years. His collection includes a shelf of New Jersey planes as well as quite a number of other New Jersey tools (even including 2 or 3 wrenches). Another of his special interests is 18th century English planes.

What does a collector of planes do when he retires? Much of Jack's "last couple of years" has been spent in writing THE WOODEN PLANE, a book which is being published and will be available late next year. The current issue of PLANE TALK has excerpts from the first two chapters of the book. It is evident that he is well prepared to address CRAFTS on the topic of "The Early History and Development of the Wooden Plane"

Jack's woodworking, that had been "pretty much on hold" during the time that he was writing, is now being utilized in producing a replica of an early Roman plane. The original was found in Salzburg, Germany, excavated from an ancient well. (Continued on page 7)



Jack and Helen Whelan with Some of His Wooden Planes



The 1991-92 CRAFTS year got off to a good start with our picnic September 15, in spite of less than sparkling weather. The Brady Camp accommodations coped with this admirably, under the flawless guidance of our Picnic Manager, Ken Vliet (with Annette's help). The Swap'n'Sell was in full swing long before the official starting time of 10 AM, and there were many mouth-watering tools to admire or acquire.

This was our largest picnic yet. Reservations were made for 171 adults and 11 children, but actual attendance was larger than this. Although registration was not accepted at the site, members who missed the deadline were welcomed to the activities but were not accommodated in the Lunch line.

Displays set up by members in the dining hall were outstanding. The Judges must have had a difficult task choosing the best: Chuck Granick and Joe Hauck for the men, Kathie Comerford for the women.

An unadvertised attraction was a charming performance by two Scotch Terriers guided by their trainer, Kathie Comerford. The rapt faces of the children in the audience bespoke their appreciation. Another new feature was a quick, country-style auction ably cried by Joe Hauck, which found new homes for a dozen or so tools. The expected Chinese Auction, competition for ugliest tool, most beautiful tool, most unusual tool, and best make-do, and a most unusual selection of Whatzits, filled out the afternoon.

One of the gratifying characteristics of our members is their willingness to lend a hand in the chores associated with any activity. To all who participated, our thanks.

The Harry O'Neill award is presented annually to a member who has contributed in an outstanding manner to the operations of the Club (as did the gentleman for whom it is named). This year it went to the team of MarKay Zlucky and Fran Smith. These ladies cheerfully accept the nerve-wracking task of keeping track of your Auction expenditures and

preparing your bill (hardly a restful way to spend a day off!). MarKay would have received the award long ago except for an unusual handicap: it would not have looked well for the President to select his wife as recipient. She stumped us in our quest for a suitable gift. Our scouts failed to locate an example of Czechoslovakian glass (etched with the country of origin) which she collects, and we were reduced to presenting a gift certificate. Fran posed an easier shopping problem. After consultation with her husband Frank, a pair of golden earrings was selected.

▪ The Mercer Museum, in Doylestown, PA, is holding a major "Whatsit" session on November 3. Any and all are invited to bring tools and devices to be identified, by EAIA volunteers. These include CRAFTSMen Ken Hopfel, Walter Jacob, Bob Nelson, Don Wallace (our own Whatsit Chair), Paul Weidenschilling, and Bob Zarich.

▪ As we told you in the last issue, this issue marks the farewell performance of the editing team of Mary Alice and Frank W. Kingsbury. As you know, they have done a great job and deserve the thanks of the entire membership. The new Editor, Stu Shippey, has been working with them and is set to produce the first 1992 issue.

▪ WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS: Joining us since the last TOOLSHED issued are Thomas and Diann Byrne (Southampton, PA), Philip Eng (Woodhaven, NY), Murray and Bernice Halpern (Willingboro), Charles and Barbara Hildebrandt (Oldwick), Gaspar and Cecilia Lesznik (Wyckoff), Floyd and Florence Niece (Stockton), Ernest Possien (Oxford), Gerold H. Smith (Ocean Twp.), and Jack Zimmerman (Punxsutawney, PA).

* * *

AUCTION ALERT

April 4, 1992 may seem a long way off, but it is time to begin getting ready by picking up your forms at the November meeting. They will include your Consignment Number. Should you be unable to attend the meeting, you may request yours by writing:

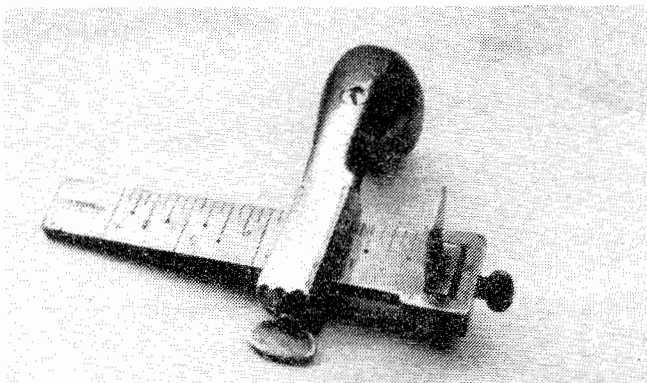
Joe Hauck
85 Brunswick Avenue
Lebanon, N.J. 08833.

DRAW GAUGE MAKERS

by Kenneth K. Hopfel

As a member of CRAFTS, I enjoy collecting tools of New Jersey origin. Although I try to contain my enthusiasm to the area of wood molding planes, this is almost impossible. One of the other areas that I find most interesting is leather working tools, especially those of the harness maker. Personally, I find the draw gauge to be the most intriguing amongst leather tools, comparable to the planemaker's plow. As there is little conclusive documentation on many of these leather working tools, or their manufacturers/cutlers, it certainly adds to the interest of a new discovery.

One of the cutlers who has successfully evaded us is Wm. Brown. To date I have failed to find any documentation on this tool maker, but have found several examples of his work which all seem to be related to harness or leather working tools. One of the pieces I have in my collection is a brass and rosewood draw gauge marked: "Wm. Brown Newark N.J." The



Wm. Brown Draw Gauge

cutting arm on this implement is made of iron and includes both line and punch marks to indicate measurements. The fact that his name is not mentioned in any of the Newark directories, plus the rarity of his tools, could indicate a very limited work period.

Aaron Crawford is another cutler from Newark who manufactured quality tools. The draw gauge I have is stamped: A.CRAWFORD/ F.A.H./NEWARK N.J.

I had no idea what the "F.A.H." stood for until recently when I acquired a draw gauge manufactured by HATHORN/ Newark. This

A.CRAWFORD

F.A.H.

NEWARK N.J.

gauge is stamped as follows: HATHORN/F.A.H./ NEWARK N.J. with the initials representing the

HATHORN

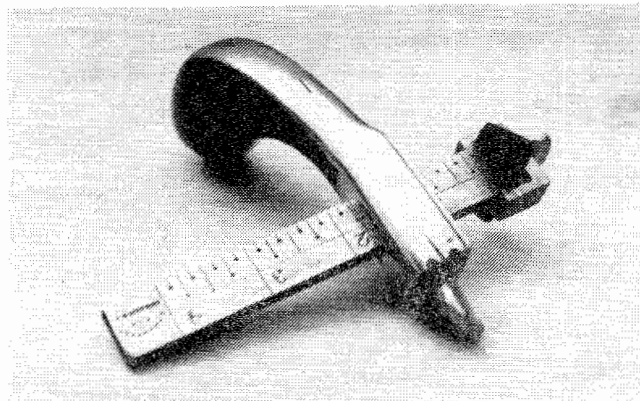
F.A.H.

NEWARK N.J.

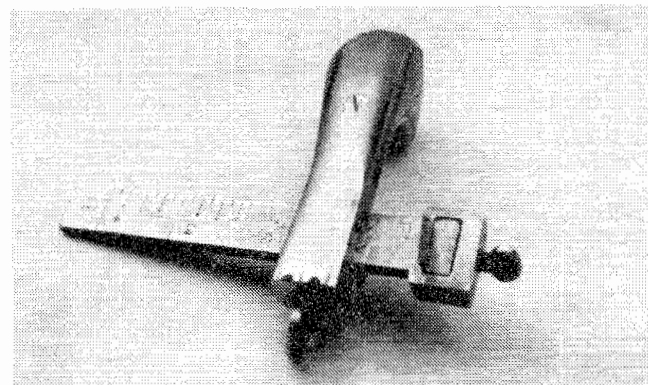
maker's full name, Fergus A. Hathorn. Additionally, the

F.A.H. stamp has the same characteristics as the stamp used on the Crawford gauge

just mentioned. This would seem to now verify that Fergus A. Hathorn had worked with Aaron Crawford and may have been partners with him at one time.



'A. CRAWFORD, F.A.H.' Draw Gauge

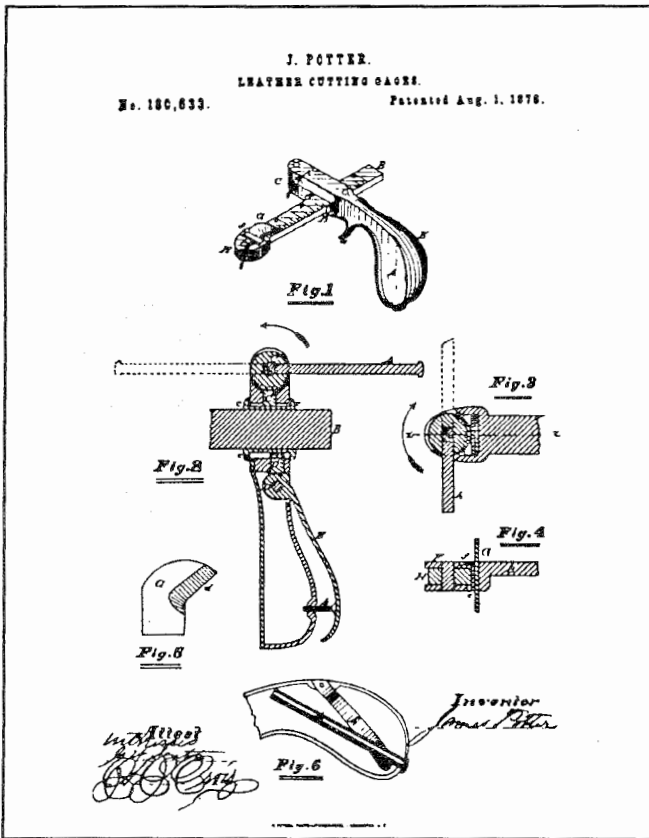


'HATHORN, F.A.H.' Draw Gauge

The Osborne brothers, without question were the most prolific and innovative of all the Newark manufacturers of harness tools. Both Charles and Henry Osborne contracted the rights to manufacture various patented leather working tools. Some of C. S. Osborne's draw gauges are stamped with a patent date of Aug. 1, 1877. In researching this draw gauge and date, I discovered the patent of J. Potter, Chicago, Ill., which in appearance is very similar to the Cooper's patented draw gauge pictured in a C. S. Osborne tool catalog. I could not find the relationship between Cooper and Potter but both the patent and the catalog feature a draw gauge with a cam lock (Continued on next page)

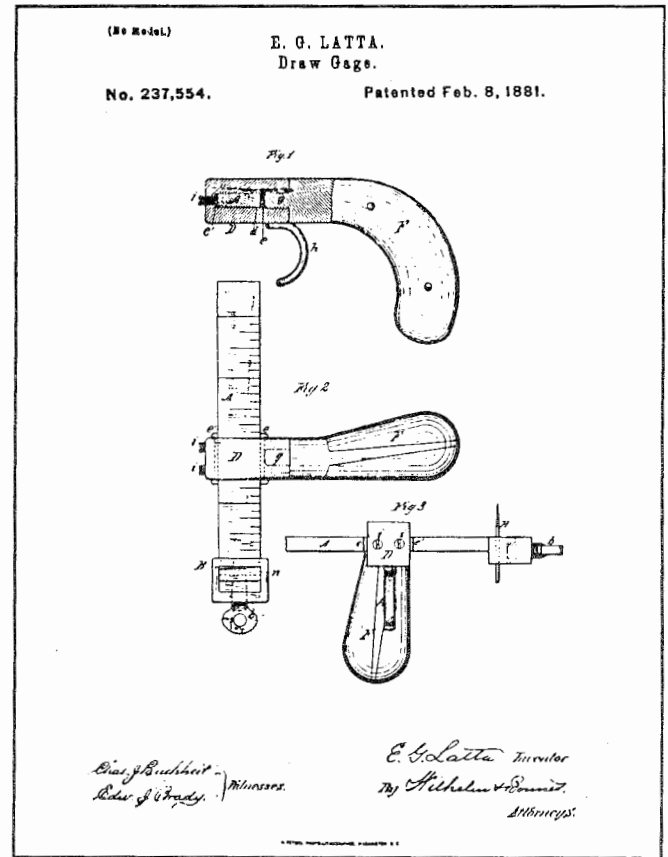
DRAW GAUGE MAKERS (Continued)

for cutting adjustment.

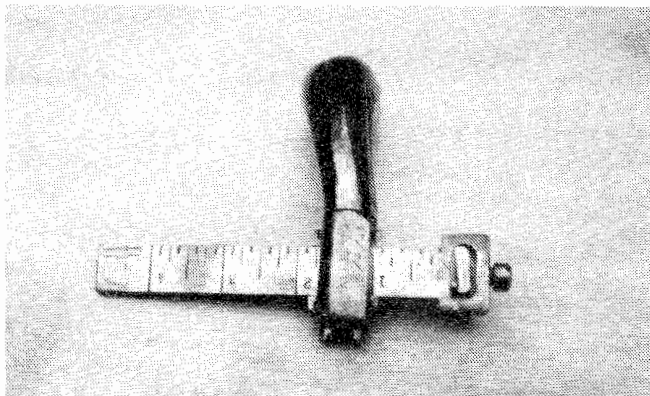


J. Potter Draw Gauge Patent Drawings
Henry F. Osborne manufactured the patented draw gauge of E. G. Latta, Friendship,

Osborne have later manufacturing characteristics and were probably made after Charles acquired Henry's business.



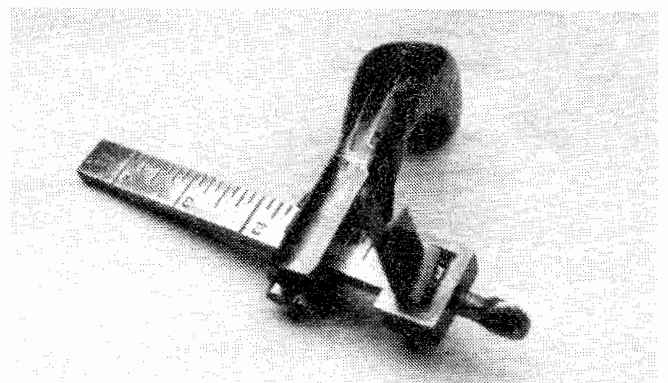
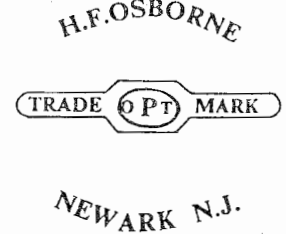
Latta Draw Gauge Patent Drawings
Many of Henry's tools are stamped with his name and trade mark as shown.



Twist Handle Draw Gauge by H. F. Osborne
New York. This twist handle design was patented Feb. 8, 1881 and assigned to H. F. Osborne to manufacture. The design enabled the user to quickly adjust the cutting measurement by turning the front half of the tool.

C. S. Osborne also made some of these tools but did not stamp them with the patent date. These twist handle gauges from C. S.

However, to date I have been unable to confirm what the letters "OPT" in his logo stand for. One fellow collector has suggested "Osborne Patent Tool" as a possibility.



Twist Handle Draw Gauge by C. S. Osborne

CRAFTS PICNIC

If it's the food that makes it a picnic, it's the tools that distinguish the CRAFTS picnic from all others. However, there were other activities for those not so inclined.

While tools were being swapped and sold, Bert Bouwman provided games for the girls. Beth Ann, Jenny, Laura, Vigdis, Amber, Heather, Danielle, Holly and Sarah participated.

There were displays to be viewed and admired such as Kathy Comerford's collection of the Royal Art Jewelry Company's molds and products [the lady's award], Sid Groke's varied and unusual wood carvings, and Dominic Micalizzi's collection of statuettes of "Persons at Work". Other displays included Ken Vliet's "Small-Wrench



Collection", Howard Price's "Speed Indicators", Burt Cohen's outstanding caliper collection, Carl Bopp's display of slender, graceful sickles entitled "Christ Reaping Hooks" (for their maker) and [the Judges' choice] Chuck Granick's & Joe Hauck's "Figured Woods Used in Tools"--- and they were prizeworthy beauties.



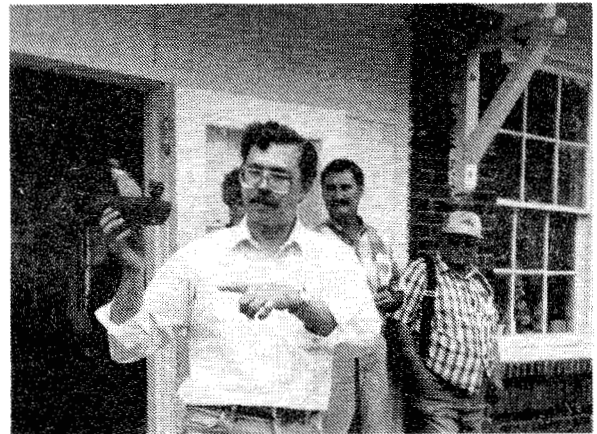
Display - "Figured Woods in Tools" by Granick & Hauck

In spite of clouds (which kept it cool) and the prediction of rain, there was only a two-minute shower while we were enjoying our meal indoors. The food was great and the desserts

that members brought were excellent.

In the "Guess How Many", there was a tie between Charles Hildebrant and Vincent Soukup for the Men's Tack Guessing Game. Betty Novinger won the Ladies' Bean-count and Beth Ann Bouwman made the M & M champion guess.

Scotties, Tweedy and Roddie, with Kathy Comerford, demonstrated their ability to follow commands and hand signals, with and without a leash, jumping over barriers, and retrieving, to the delight of the children, ladies, etc. Because this was concurrent with the mini-auction, many of the men missed it.



A Plane in Joe Hauck's Hand Brings a Response
Meanwhile, just outside of the dining hall door, Joe Hauck was auctioneering tools that were brought by members. This new feature on our CRAFTS picnic agenda met with a great deal of interest.

Next came time for making awards. The president selected a pair of ladies for the Harry O'Neill Award. Markay Zluky and Fran Smith have helped with our Spring Auctions for many years and their contribution has been worthy of the recognition they received.

The award for the "Most Beautiful Tool", a Chapin (Union Factory) Plane went to Burt Cohen. The "Most Ugly Tool" was another plane submitted by Larry Cohen. Howard Price's pipe attachment was declared the "Most Unusual Tool", and Louis Schmidt's entry for the "Best Make-do Repair" was an old plane.

Lastly, the Chinese Auction kept us hoping as numbers were drawn and prizes distributed.

Ken Vliet commented that there had been more volunteer help than ever and his thanks goes to all who took part in making this picnic a success and his job rewarding. Thanks Ken!

NEW BOOK BY THE POLLAKS (Continued)
 produced. Moreover, this is a book, not a large-sized journal. It fits comfortably in one's hand. Anyone who has ever tried to relax in an easy chair while balancing a volume of CHRONICLE reprints can appreciate that.

After the many good things are said, one cannot help but wish the editors had chosen another title for this volume. SELECTIONS FROM THE CHRONICLE will commend this work to tool enthusiasts, but it will not attract as wide an audience as the book deserves. This is a collection of real value. It belongs not only on the shelves of every tool collector but in public libraries and school libraries everywhere.

In sum, this is a book that is easy to enjoy. It should delight tool buffs and stir the interest of anyone concerned with our nation's past. If you want a holiday gift for someone who likes tools, look no further.

* * *

If you expect perfection from people, your whole life is a series of disappointments, grumblings and complaints. If, on the contrary, you pitch your expectations low, taking folks as the inefficient creatures they are, you are frequently surprised by having them perform better than you had hoped.

---Bruce Burton

IN APPRECIATION

There are two CRAFTSMEN who, for a number of years, have contributed pictures to THE TOOL SHED that they have taken of members, meetings, speakers and other events. The present Co-Editors would like to thank Don Kahn and Ken Jones for their interest and contributions.



Don Kahn



Ken Jones

* * *

SPEAKER'S PROFILE - JOHN M. WHELAN

(Continued)

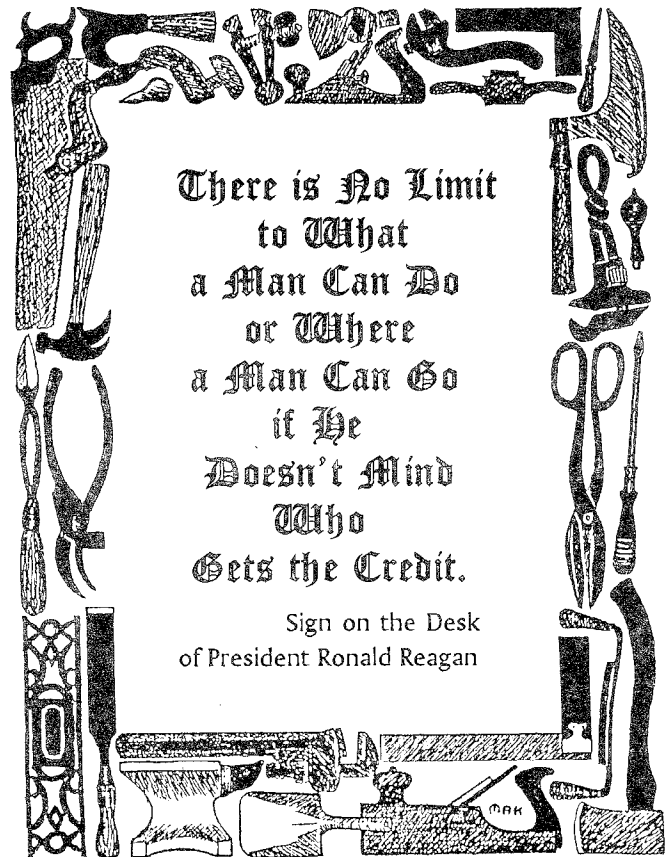
Other projects that have demonstrated his talents include a reproduction of a "Shaker" pedestal table, a silver chest, chests of drawers, and a grandfather clock. He has designed and built tools to use in pursuing hobbies such as Gemstone cutting and polishing, and Electronics.

A 1941 Mechanical Engineering graduate of Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, John M. Whelan spent his entire career with Union Carbide in Bound Brook. He obtained a Master's Degree from Stevens in '53 and a Doctorate from Polytechnic University in Brooklyn in '59 in the field of Polymer Chemistry. At retirement from Union Carbide in 1983 he was Assistant Director of Research. He and Helen were married in 1943 and have a daughter, Kathleen, and two sons, Dennis and Kerry.

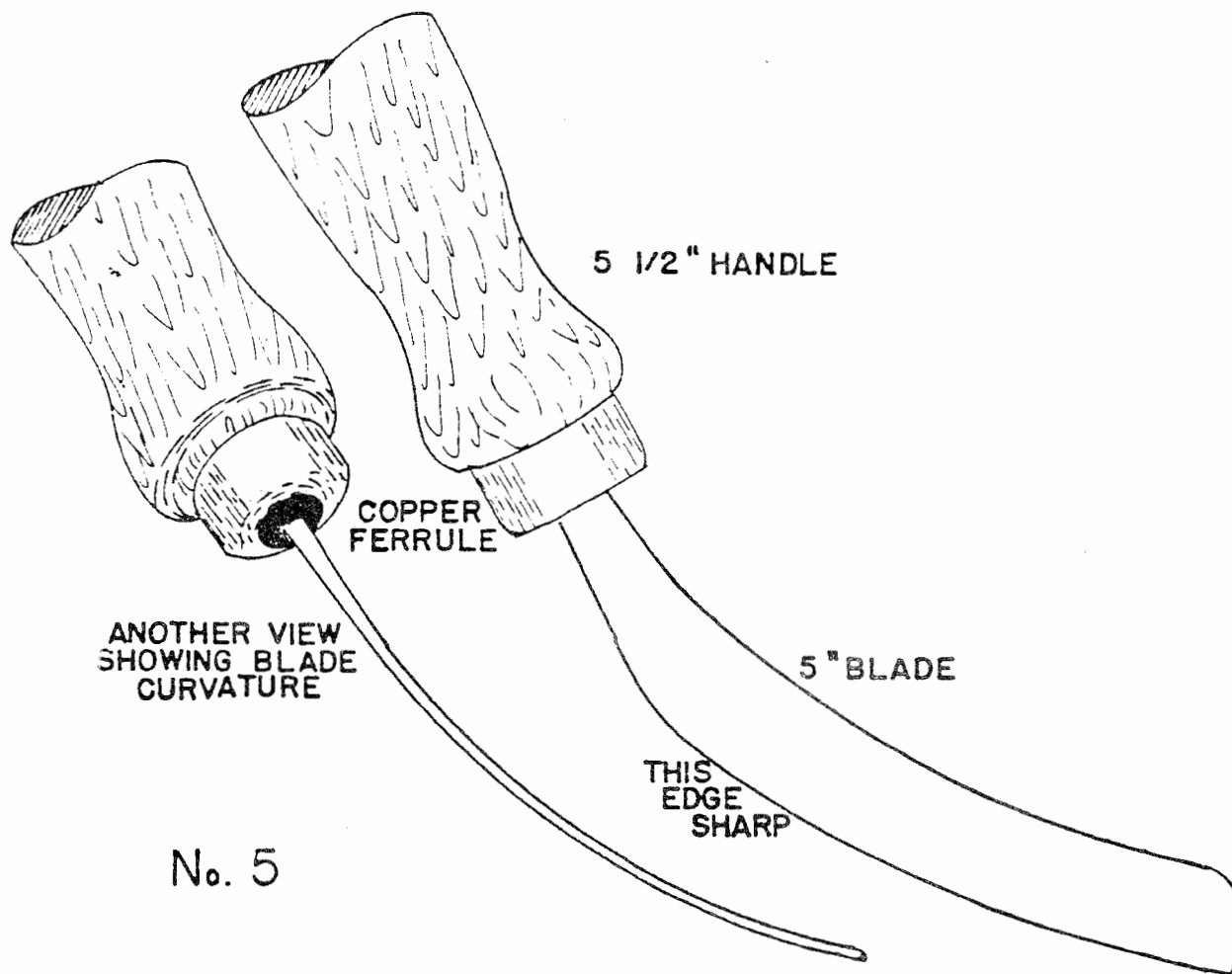
* * *

Retirement is twice as much husband on half as much money.

---Seen on a Plaque & Quoted in Guideposts.



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TOOL SHED DEADLINE

DECEMBER 26, 1991 is the last date for your article, letter, or picture to be received for the February Issue of THE TOOL SHED.

Stuart Shippey, our new editor, will be taking over the responsibility of producing that issue and would appreciate your contributions. Please mail them to him at 251 Hillside Avenue, Chatham, N.J. 07928.

COMING EVENTS

- NOVEMBER 3, 1991 - MERCER MUSEUM
Whatsit Session, Doylestown, PA
- NOVEMBER 10, 1991 - CRAFTS MEETING at
High Bridge. "Early History and Development of the Wooden Plane" by Jack Whelan
- FEBRUARY 2, 1992 - CRAFTS MEETING at
High Bridge with Dominic Micalizzi.
- APRIL 4, 1992 - CRAFTS AUCTION at the
Holiday Inn, Clinton, N.J.
- APRIL 5, 1992 - CRAFTS MEETING at High
Bridge with Alexander Farnham.
- JUNE 7, 1992 - CRAFTS MEETING with Emil S.
Pollak.

CRAFTS of New Jersey meets at the HOST Masonic Lodge in High Bridge. Take Interstate 78 to the Route 31 exit at Clinton. Go north on Route 31 two miles to the second traffic light at the High Bridge exit. Turn right and go about 1/2 mile to Dennis Avenue on the left. Turn and go to the Masonic Lodge. Tailgate sales in the parking lot begin at 1:00 P.M.; meeting at 2:00.