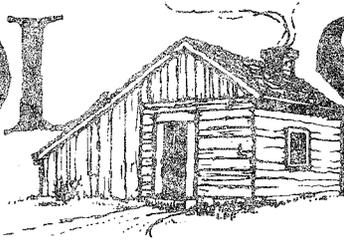


The TOOL SHED

21
Number 20



April 1982

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A NEW JERSEY BRACE by Dominic Micalizzi

As a tool collector who specializes in braces, I have frequently lamented the scarcity of braces made in New Jersey. I know that George Wheatcroft made them, and I own three different types of wrench braces made by Peter Lowentraut. But I had never come across any other makers from the Garden State.

This was changed, however, one rainy Sunday in March, when I was coaxed into going to a New Jersey indoor flea market infamous for its new merchandise (it will remain nameless lest I start a stampede of tool collectors).

among the stalls of jewelry, jeans, and jive I spied a sign announcing "Guns and Antiques."

I peered in. There were a few wooden planes and—lo and behold!—hanging from a beam was an odd-looking brace.

The brace was metal and of conventional shape, with a rosewood wrist and pad. The ferrules on the wrist were brass. The most unusual feature of the brace was the chuck, which had a large thumbscrew in the top (see Figure 1).

(continued on page 5)

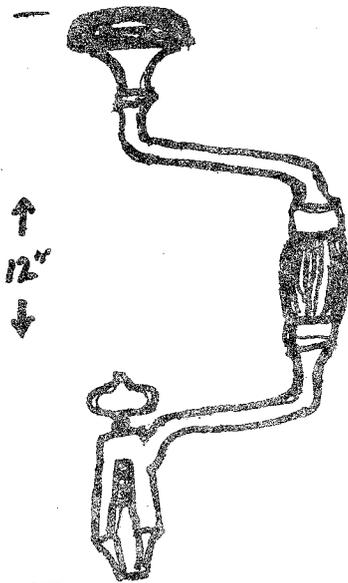


Figure 1: NJ-made brace.
Rosewood wrist and pad.

After searching through the back-room antiques section and coming up empty handed, I had just about concluded that the day was wasted, when

FOUNTAIN TO SPEAK AT APRIL 18th MEETING

The next meeting of CRAFTS of New Jersey will be held on Sunday, April 18, at the Indian Queen Tavern, East Jersey Olde Towne, in Piscataway.

As in February, the April meeting will begin with the Swap & Sell at 1:00 p. m. The formal program will start promptly at 2:00.

There has been a change in the program that was previously announced. Raymond R. Townsend will not be able to attend the April meeting, so his talk on "Early Shoemaking" has been postponed until fall.

Instead, the program will feature CRAFTSman Harold Fountain of Westhampton Beach, N. Y. His topic
(continued on page 5)



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

PRESIDENT _____ Stephen Zluky, Whitehouse
VICE PRESIDENT _____ Harry J. O'Neill, Annandale
SECRETARY _____ Robert Fridlington, Cranford
TREASURER _____ C. Carroll Palmer, Plainfield

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 five dollars for the membership year of July 1 to June 30. Membership fees may be sent to the Treasurer: C. Carroll Palmer, 725 Pemberton Ave., Plainfield, N.J. 07060.

The Tool Shed

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

**BOPP APPOINTED TO
GRANTS-IN-AID
COMMITTEE OF E. A. I. A.**

CRAFTSman Carl E. Bopp, of Audubon, was recently appointed to the Grants-In-Aid Committee of the Early American Industries Association.

His appointment, which was made in February, filled a vacancy created by the resignation of Earl Osborn.

The Grants-In-Aid Committee, chaired by Charles F. Hummel of the Winterthur Museum, conducts one of the more important programs sponsored by the Association—the support of research. CRAFTSman Alexander Farnham received an EAIA grant-in-aid in 1981 for his research on early New Jersey tool makers.

Bopp, who has been active in the EAIA for a number of years, also serves on the Board of Directors of CRAFTS of New Jersey, and he is a frequent contributor to the Tool Shed.

**INFORMATION WANTED ON
BROOM-MAKING MACHINERY**

Ray Hill, a CRAFTSmember from Clarksville, Md., is pursuing some research on broom making, and she would be grateful for any information that our readers could provide.

Specifically, Ray wants information on the types of machines and hand tools used in broom making, the names and working dates of broom-machinery makers and manufacturers, and the location of existing broom-making equipment. She is also looking for the names and addresses of broom factories, both those of bygone days and those still in operation.

Let's help her make a clean sweep. If you have any of the above information, write to:

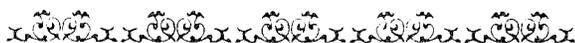
Mrs. Ray Hill
13933 Wayside Drive
Clarksville, MD 21029

**PALMER EXHIBITS
TOOL COLLECTION**

From February 4 to March 17, the Trailside Museum in Mountainside, N. J., presented a spectacular exhibition of early woodworking tools from the collection of CRAFTSman C. Carroll Palmer of Plainfield.

In connection with the exhibition, Carroll gave a lecture on antique tools and tool collecting in the Museum Auditorium on February 24. Widely publicized, the exhibition drew large numbers of visitors and, incidently, resulted in several new CRAFTS memberships.

Carroll bought his first antique tool 48 years ago, back in 1934, and he has been collecting ever since. For eight years, from 1972 to 1979, the entire Palmer collection was exhibited at Liberty Village in Flemington, N. J.



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THE "NARROW AXE":
A COMMENT FROM THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

The following excerpt is taken from The New-England Farmer; or, Geographical Dictionary, the classic eighteenth-century encyclopedia of American agriculture, written by Samuel Deane and published in Worcester, Mass., in 1790. As its subtitle explains, the Dictionary contains "a Compendious Account of the Ways and Methods in which the Most Important Art of Husbandry, in all its Various Branches, is, or may be, Practiced to the Greatest Advantage in this Country."

As Deane's Dictionary is concerned with agriculture, it contains few entries on tools. Indeed, the axe appears to be the only tool included that is not exclusively an agricultural implement. Nevertheless, Deane's comments on the axe are interesting. Note particularly his use of the term "narrow axe" and his curious statement about the poll.

"AXE, a necessary tool for farmers. A narrow axe is meant; for a broad axe is a carpenter's tool. A narrow axe should have a thick poll, as in that part it commonly fails soonest. It should be made of the best of iron and steel, be quite free from cracks and flaws, and nicely tempered; not so soft as to bend, nor so hard as to break.

"Take care that you do not grind your axes thin at first, till you learn by using them what their temper is, and whether they will bear it. A rounding edge is best for chopping large logs, a straighter one for smaller wood.

"Let the helve of an axe be made of the toughest of wood, either walnut or white oak. Let it be set in the centre of the eye, and at right angles with the outer side of the axe; let it be small near the eye, that the hands may not be too much jarred by the

strokes, and gradually larger towards the other end. Three feet is the greatest length that almost ever will be needful: Shorter for chopping sticks not uncommonly large.

"A good deal of rubbing with a whetstone, after an axe is ground, is best, not only to bring it to a good edge that will not crumble, but chiefly to make the blade very smooth, that it may enter the wood easily, and not stick too fast when entered."

CRAFTS WELCOMES
NEW MEMBERS

The CRAFTS of New Jersey membership roster continues to grow. In this issue we extend a warm welcome to the fifteen new members who are listed below.

Mr. John Cammarata, 30 Lilac Drive, Syosset, NY 11791.

Mr. William H. Flaherty, 5 Monmouth Place, Monmouth Beach, NJ 07750.

Mr. and Mrs. John H. Hilbert, 14 Tiensch Ave., Leonardo, NJ 07737.

Mr. and Mrs. Jim Hill, 13933 Wayside Drive, Clarksville, MD 21029.

Mr. Robert Jebens, R.D. #1, Box 64C Hollow Road, Skillman, NJ 08558.

Mr. Donald R. Peloubut, 39 Dacotah Ave., Lake Hiawatha, NJ 07034.

Dr. and Mrs. M.E. Sanford, 27 Ross Street, Somerville, NJ 08876.

Mr. Ralph Space, Beemerville Road, Sussex, NJ 07461.

Mr. Mark Wallace, 521 Jessamine Ave., Collingswood, NJ 08107.

Mr. David A. Weinbaum, 340 Atlantic Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11201.

Mr. and Mrs. John Williams, 205 Douglas Drive, West Chester, PA 19380.

ON THE TRAIL OF THE NATIVE CRAFTSMAN
by Harry O'Neill

A few years ago I was lucky enough to make a trip through Morocco. I had vowed that while on this trip I would find a native craftsman and watch him use his native tools.

When we arrived in Marrakech our tour group, with two guides, headed for the notorious Casbah, filled with native shops and native craftsmen (and native smells). We had been warned not to wander from the group, as the chance of finding our way out of the maze of alleys and tunnels was remote, and as the neighborhood probably would not be safe for a lone foreigner.

At one point on the tour our herd of tourists was corralled into a cavernous room off a narrow alley and shown an exquisite assortment of rugs—all for sale, of course. I asked one of our English-speaking guides whether there might be a chance for me to see a woodworking shop while the rest of the group haggled over carpet prices. We had passed brass workers, leather workers, a tanning operation, and even a fellow using his toes to do wood turning—but no woodworkers.

The guide produced a willing native, who spoke no English, and within a few minutes we were on our way. Off we went, up stairs and down stairs, through tunnels and jostling crowds, in and out of the crowded alleys, until at last we stopped in front of a cave-like shop about the size of a one-car garage. Here was my sought-after woodworking shop.

With sign language as my only means of communication, I greeted the young boy who was in the dingy shop. With a big grin the youngster showed me some of the beautiful cabinets that he was working on.

Now my moment was at hand. After more finger pointing and hand wiggling, he finally understood that

I wanted to see his tools. His grin got even bigger, and with a wave of his hand he motioned for me to follow him.

We bent down and went through a small opening into another room. The boy led me to a crude work table, puffed out his chest, and pointed to his prize tools. Now I could return to my group having fulfilled my dream of seeing a native woodworker's shop and the native woodworker's tools.

There they were, spread out before me—planes, routers, and a complete set of chisels. All were bright and shiny and new. And all were STANLEY U.S.A.

(For more of Harry O'Neill's adventures in the land of mystery and enchantment, see page 6.)

CRAFTS AUCTION
WILL BE ON MAY 1st

CRAFTS of New Jersey will hold its spring auction on Saturday, May 1, at the Taylor Hose Co., in High Bridge, N. J. The auction will begin at 10:00 a. m.

The co-managers of the sale, Chuck Granick and Harry O'Neill, have once again done an outstanding job of gathering together more than 400 lots of high quality tools for collectors and for users.

There will be something for everyone: woodworking tools; blacksmith's tools; cooper's tools; a cage-head brace; a brass egg-beater drill; New Jersey planes; and lots of Stanley. The range runs from an anvil to an Ultimatum.

So get ready to attend the best auction of the season! The proceeds from the sale go to support CRAFTS publications fund.

(NJ Brace, continued from page 1)

At first glance it appeared that something was missing from the side of the chuck, as it was open. But on closer examination I could see that the opening was to accommodate the bit, which slid in from the side. The thumbscrew would down on top of the bit, holding it fast (see Figure 2).

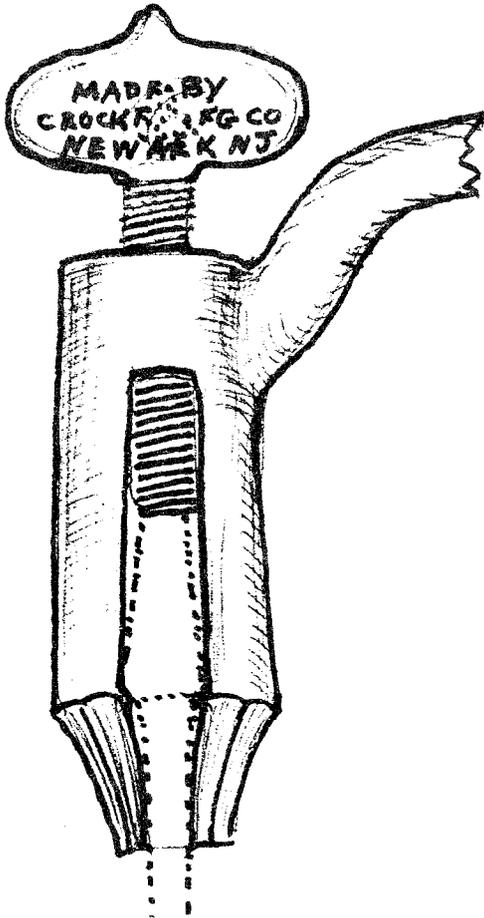


Figure 2: Drawing of chuck, actual size. Bit fits into opening on side. Thumbscrew turns down on top of bit to hold it fast.

After purchasing (some might say "stealing") the brace, I examined it for patent date and maker's name. I was soon convinced that there was no patent date; but on either side of the thumbscrew I could barely make out the letters ARK. "Newark!" flashed through my mind as I scrubbed vigorously with my thumb. My heart skipped a beat as the ARK extended

out to WARK NJ.

Now I knew I had it! I took out a pencil and rubbed with the eraser until I could read: MADE BY/ CROCKF-----FG CO/ NEWARK NJ.

Unfortunately, the center portion on both sides of the thumbscrew is corroded, and the maker's full name is illegible. But after examining it with a loupe, I believe it reads "Crockford Mfg Co."

This was a double rarity. Not only had I found a most unusual brace, but it was one made in New Jersey.

(Ed. note: A hasty and rather un-systematic check of New Jersey industrial directories, made just as this issue went to press, failed to turn up a Crockford Mfg. Co. But Crockford is a name that can be found in Newark's past. In 1887 a Crockford Steam Generator Plant, located in Newark, was incorporated in the state of New Jersey.)

(Meeting, continued from page 1) will be "Basic Frame and Window Sash Making." Harold originally had been scheduled to appear on the program next fall, but he graciously agreed to step in early and demonstrate his sash-making magic for us at this meeting.

Also, Chuck Granick and Harry O'Neill will bring members the latest word on the CRAFT auction, which will be held in High Bridge, N. J., on May first. And the program will conclude with the "Whatsit?" session. So be prepared for a full and interesting afternoon.

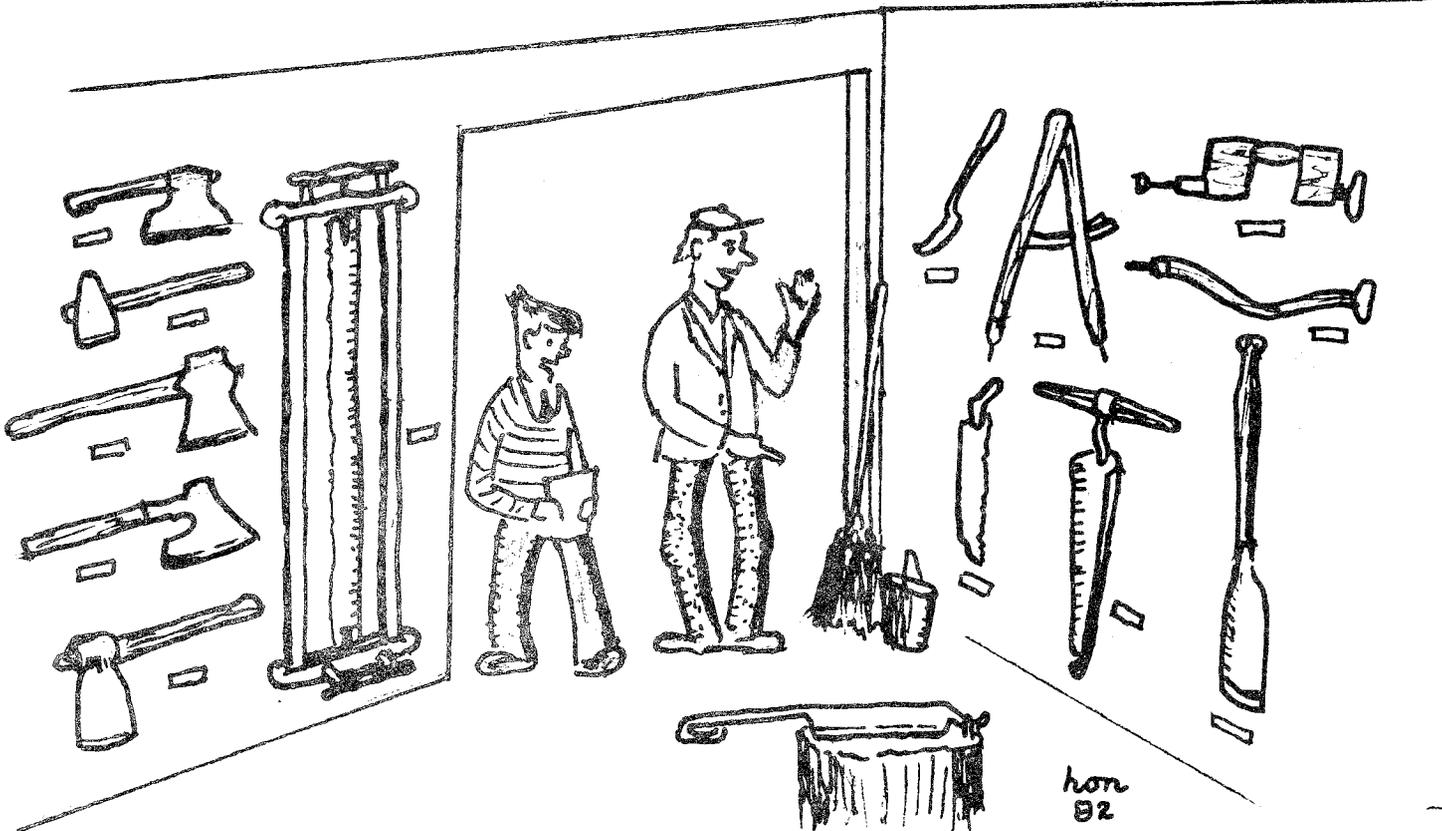
Looking ahead on the calendar, the final meeting of the 1981-82 year will be held on June 6, when Harry O'Neill will demonstrate "Pattern Making and Molding." Plans call for the June meeting to be held out-of-doors if the weather is suitable.

COME WITH ME TO THE CASBAH



The above photo shows a Moroccan turner in the Casbah of Marrakech using a bow and his toes to turn wood. My first attempt to get a picture of this curious operation was meet with outrage and a grab for my camera. I later learned that a devout Moslem believes that a photograph relieves him of part of his soul. When I next came across a toe turner, I bided my time. I waited until his head was down, then rushed up, snapped his picture, and ran like hell. He probably never knew that he had lost part of his soul that day. — Harry O'Neill

* * * * *



"We went thru this room. I remember the broom and pail"

TRANSITIONAL AND METALLIC PLANES: A REVIEW
by Stephen Zluky

Patented Transitional & Metallic
Planes in America, 1827-1927.
By Roger K. Smith. Lancaster,
Mass.: North Village Publishing
Co., 1981. iv, 336 pp. Illustra-
tions, notes, appendices, biblio-
graphy, and index. Available from
Roger K. Smith, 1444 No. Main
Street, Lancaster, Mass. 01523.
\$58.00 postpaid.

For a number of years Roger K. Smith has been conscientiously re-
searching the history of transitional
and metallic planes in America,
tracking down obscure makers and
searching out long-forgotten infor-
mation. And what a job he has done!
Now, the results of his labors have
been brought together in this exhaus-
tively detailed, magnificently pro-
duced work that should achieve the
status of an instant classic.

Upon opening this book the reader
is confronted with the overwhelming
temptation just to lean back and
browse, to idly leaf through the pages,
to look at the pictures, to relax and
simply enjoy it.

But the real enjoyment comes
with sitting down and reading through
this fascinating, well-written story,
beginning with Hazard Knowles and
the first metallic plane in America
and going through all of the inventors,
developers, and manufacturers who
attempted to improve upon existing
patents and to market their ingenious
devices.

Special emphasis is given to the
early search for an efficient means of
adjusting and holding the cutter and to
the pioneer manufacturers of tran-
sitional and metallic planes. Rather
than merely listing these makers
alphabetically or chronologically,
Smith has chosen to study their rela-
tionship with one another in the de-
velopment of new ideas for plane

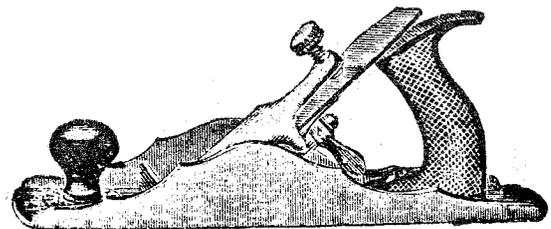
improvements.

Special chapters are devoted to
Leonard Bailey and His Planes, the
Bailey Tool Company, John Gage and
the Gage Tool Company, the Stanley
Rule and Level Co., and to the leading
competitors of Stanley. Patented
plow planes and the development of
metallic combination planes are also
noted separately.

Perhaps the most significant items
for the avid plane collectors are the
superb illustrations and photographs—
more than 100 line illustrations, 41
full-color photos, and over 300 in
black and white. Clear, crisp, and
showing exceptional detail, the pic-
tures alone are worth the price.

And the price is rather substantial.
But once you have sampled the text,
once you have been seduced by the
photographs, the cost factor is for-
gotten. Actually, given the prices of
books these days, this work is pro-
bably a bargain. It is big, 8 1/2" x 11",
handsomely bound, and printed on
heavy, glossy stock.

With this work, Roger Smith has
made an important and lasting con-
tribution to the study of antique tools.
Future research will undoubtedly
uncover new information and develop
new perspectives. But Smith's work
will remain the basic reference on
transitional and metallic planes. It
deserves a place on the shelf beside
Mercer and Salaman. No tool library
will be complete without it.

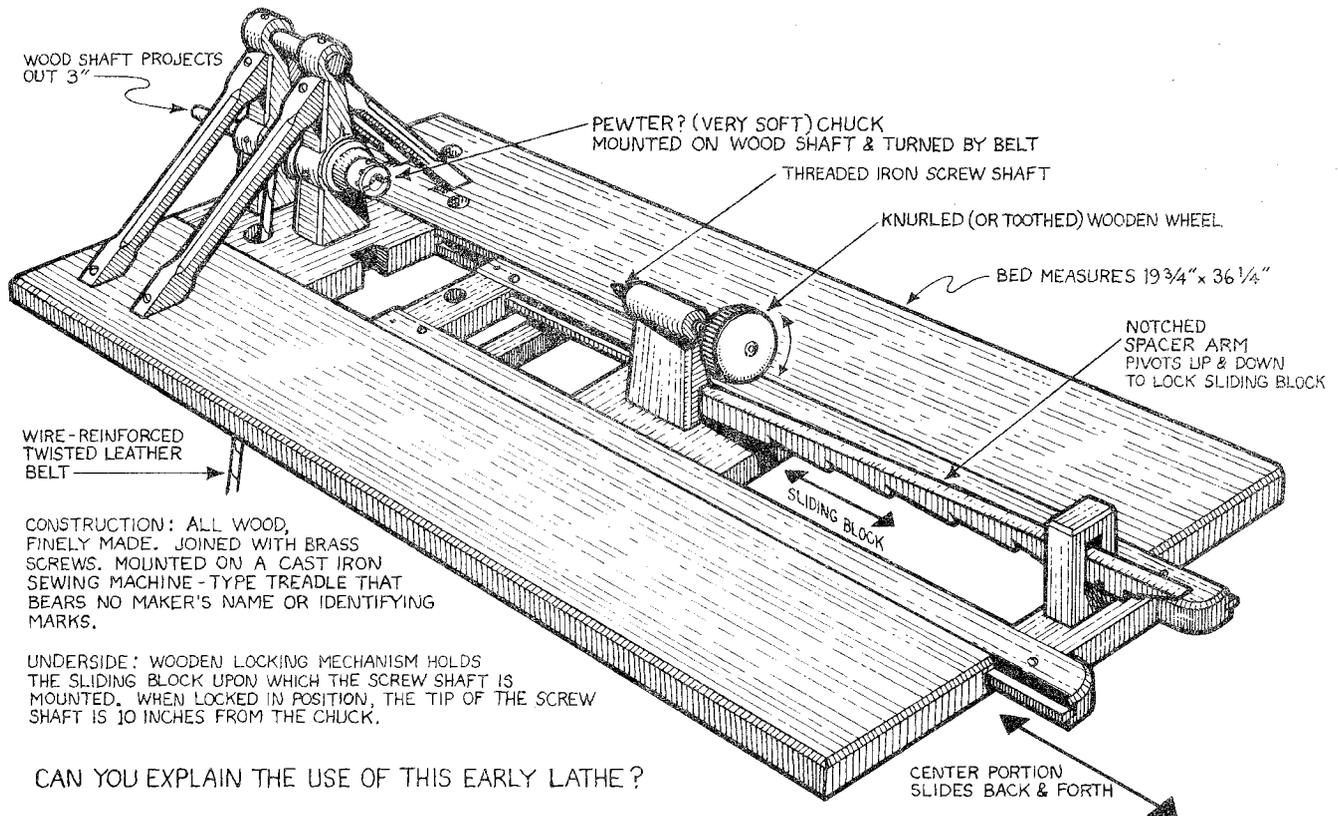


Pop Rivet's What's It? No. 3



by LARRY FUHRO

A BIG 'UN THIS TIME...
FROM HARRY O'NEILL, ANNANDALE, NJ



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GADGETS · DOOHICKEYS · THINGAMAJIGS · AND WHATCHAMACALLITS

With "What's It? No. 3" Pop Rivet portrays a different type of thingamajig. This is not one of those gadgets or doohickeys that you hold in your hand or carry around in your pocket. This is a big, heavy hunk of machinery.

Yet, the weight of this "What's It?" is primarily in the iron base, which contains the treadle. The top portion, illustrated above, is well made but is relatively light, and it does not seem that it could stand much stress or heavy duty.

Do you know what it is? If you

have an idea, please let us hear from you.

The "What's It?" in our last issue drew much interest but few good ideas. One suggestion was that it was used to mark the end of stock being turned on a lathe to indicate depths.

Another, though related, idea saw it as a wheelwright's marking gauge, used to mark the ends of wheel hubs—although no one was quite certain why a hub should be marked with ten concentric circles.

Thus far the score is Pop Rivet 2, tool experts 0.